ETHEL MORTON AT ROSE HOUSE

From. Ross.

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The Ethel Morton Books

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By

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THE WORLD SYNDICATE PUBLISHING COMPANY
Cleveland, Ohio New York, N. Y.

Printed in the United States of America
by
THE COMMERCIAL BOOKBINDING CO.
CLEVELAND, OHIO

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CHAPTER I

ROGER'S IDEA

FOR the fortieth time that afternoon, it seemed to Ethel Brown Morton and her cousin, Ethel Blue, they untangled the hopelessly mixed garlands of the maypole and started the weavers once more to lacing and interlacing them properly.

"Under, over; under, over," they directed, each girl escorting a small child in and out among the gay bands of pink and white which streamed from the top of the pole.

May Day in New Jersey is never a certain quantity; it may be reminiscent of the North Pole or the Equator. This happened to be the hottest day of the year so far, and both Ethels had wiped their foreheads until their handkerchiefs were small balls too soaked to be of any further use. But they kept on, for this was the first Community Maypole that Rosemont ever had had, and the United Service Club, to which the girls belonged, was doing its part to make the afternoon successful. Helen, Ethel Brown's sister, and Margaret Hancock, another member of the Club, were teaching the younger children a folk dance on the side of the lawn; Roger

Morton, James Hancock and Tom Watkins were marshalling a group of boys and marching them back and forth across the end of the grass plot nearest the schoolhouse. Della Watkins, Tom's sister, and Dorothy Smith, a cousin of the Mortons, were going about among the mothers and urging them to let the little ones take part in the games. Everybody was busy until dusk sent the small children home and the caretaker came to uproot the pole and to shake his head ruefully over the condition of the lawn whose smoothness had been roughened by the tread of scores of dancing feet.

" It's rather hard on you, isn't it? " Ethel Brown sympathized with him; " but the children have had such a glorious afternoon that you can't begrudge it to them."

" I'd be the stingy one if I did," returned Patrick; " but they do play the mischief wid me sod."

" Pretend it's ' the ould sod ' and you'll enjoy working it into condition again," suggested Ethel Blue, who never had grown too old to enjoy " pretending."

It was while the Club members were sitting on the Mortons' veranda, resting, that Helen, who was president of the Club, called them to order.

" Saturday afternoon is our usual time of meeting," she began, " and no one can say that we haven't put in a solid afternoon of service."

Groans as one and another shifted a cramped position to another more restful for weary feet confirmed her statement.

" What I want to say now is that it's time for us to be thinking up some more service work. We are all studying pretty hard so we don't want to under-

take anything that will use up our out-of-door time too much, but we haven't anything in prospect except helping with the town Fourth of July celebration, over two months away, so we might as well be planning something else."

"Do I understand, Madam President," asked Roger, "that the chief officer of this distinguished Club hasn't any ideas to suggest?"

"The chief officer is so tired that not even another glass of lemonade — thank you, Tom — can stir her gray matter."

"Hasn't anybody else any ideas?"

Silence greeted the question.

"I seem to remember boasts that ideas never would fail this brilliant group," jeered Roger.

"There were some such remarks," James recalled meditatively; "and I remember that you prophesied that the day would come when we'd call on you for information about some stupendous scheme of yours that was literally as big as a house. Let's have it now."

"Do I understand that you're really appealing to me to learn my scheme?" inquired Roger, swelling with amusement.

"If it's any satisfaction to you — yes," replied his sister.

Roger burst into a peal of laughter.

"I'm not such a bad prophet after all," he exclaimed. "I said you'd be coming to me about the first of April —"

"I remember we spoke of your April Fool scheme," responded Tom mildly.

"— and this is the first of May. I'm only a month out in my reckoning."

"Not bad at all for a first attempt," said Ethel Brown patronizingly.

"I remember you said your grandfather would let us have a house for the plan, whatever it is," Della contributed to the general collection of reminiscences.

"He did and will. I've never let him forget his offer, because I knew that some day you'd be asking me just the questions that are now ringing in my ears."

"Shoot off the answers, then, old man," urged James. "We're waiting."

"Breathlessly," added Margaret.

Roger settled himself comfortably on the top step of the piazza and leaned his head against the post.

"It certainly does me good to see you all at my feet begging like this," he declared.

"Bosh! You're at ours and I can prove it," asserted Tom, stretching out a foot of goodly size.

"Peace! Withdraw that battering ram!" pleaded Roger. "I'll tell you all about it. Tom's really responsible for this idea, anyway."

"Ideas, real fresh ones, aren't much in my line," admitted practical Tom, "but I'm glad to have helped for once."

"I don't suppose you remember that time last autumn when I went in to New York to see you and you took me down to the chapel where your father preaches on Sunday afternoons?"

"I remember it; we found Father there talking with a lot of mothers and children."

"That's the time. Well, those women and children got on my nerves like anything. You see, out here in Rosemont we haven't any real suffering like that. There are poor people, and Mother always

does what she can for them, and there's a Charitable Society, as you know, because you all helped with the Donnybrook Fair they had on St. Patrick's Day. But the people they help out here are regular Rockefellers compared with those poor creatures that your father had in his office that day."

"Father says he could spend a million dollars a year on those people, and not have a misspent cent," said Della.

"What hit me hardest was the thin little children. Elisabeth hadn't come to us yet," Roger went on, referring to a Belgian baby that had been sent to the Club to take care of, "and I wasn't so accustomed to thinness as I've grown to be since, and it made me — well, it just made me *sick*."

"I don't wonder," agreed Della seriously. "That's the way they make me feel."

"I know what you thought of," exclaimed Ethel Blue, who was so imaginative and sympathetic that she sometimes had an almost uncanny way of reading peoples' thoughts. "You wanted to bring some of those poor women out into the country so that the children could get well, and you told your grandfather about it and he offered you a house somewhere."

"That's about it, kidlet. I heard one of the women say that she'd had a week in the country — some sort of Fresh Air business — and that the baby got a lot better, and then she had to go back to the city and the litle creature was literally dying on her hands."

"You want to give them a whole summer," guessed Ethel Brown.

"That's the idea. Since I've seen what proper

care and good food and fresh air have done for that wretched little skeleton, Elisabeth, I'm more than ever convinced that if we can give some of those mothers and babies a whole month or perhaps two months of Rosemont air we'll be saving lives, actually saving lives."

Roger looked about earnestly from one grave face to another. All were in sympathy with him and all waited for the development of his plan, for they knew he would not have laid so much stress upon it if he had not thought out the details.

"I've talked it over with Grandfather and he rose to it right off. Here's where the house comes in. He said he was going to build a new cottage for his farm superintendent this spring — you know it's almost done now — and that we could have the old farm house if we wanted to fix it up for a Fresh Air scheme."

"Mr. Emerson is a brick. I pull my forelock to him," and Tom illustrated his remark.

"Where's the money to come from?" asked James, who was both of Scottish descent and the Club treasurer, and so was not only shrewd but accustomed to look after details.

"Grandfather said he'd help in this way; if the Club would study the old house and decide on the best way to make it answer the purpose he would provide two carpenters for a fortnight to help us. That will mean that if we want to do any whitewashing or papering or matters of that kind we'll have to do it ourselves, but the carpenters will put the house in repair and put up any partitions that we want and so on."

"Is it furnished?"

"There's another problem. The superintendent has had his own furniture there and what will be left when he goes is almost nothing. There are some old things in the garret, but we'll have to use our ingenuity and invent furniture."

"The way I did for our attic." Dorothy reminded them of the room where the Club had been meeting ever since its members returned from Chautauqua where it had been formed the summer before.

"Just so. We'll have to make a raid on our mothers' attics and also on the stores in town that have their goods come in big boxes, and I imagine we shall be able to concoct things that will 'do,' though they may be remarkable to look upon."

"The mothers and children will be out of doors all the time, so they won't sit around and examine the furniture," laughed Della.

"It will be scanty, probably, but if we can get beds enough and a chair apiece, or a substitute for a chair, and a few tables, we can get along."

"There's your house provided and furnished after a fashion — how are you going to run it?" inquired Helen. "It takes shekels to buy even very plain food in these days of the 'high cost of living,' and we've got to give these women and children nourishing food; they can't live on fresh air alone."

"Praise be, fresh air costs nothing!"

"That's one thing we'll get free," laughed Roger. "Grandfather told me to investigate and see what I could find out about finances and then let him know. So I went in to see Mr. Watkins."

"And never told me," said Tom reproachfully.

"Of course not. All of you people were too sniffy. I told your father what the plan was and

what Grandfather had said. He thought it was great. He's a corker, your father is."

Della and Tom looked somewhat startled at this epithet describing their parent, but Roger meant it to be complimentary, so they made no remonstrance.

"He said right off that he could provide the women and children in any numbers and that he'd select the ones that needed the change most and would be most benefited by it."

"It's not hard to find those," murmured Della.

"Then he said that he had certain funds that he could draw on for such cases and that he'd be just as willing to pay the board for these women and children at Rosemont as anywhere else, so that we could depend on a small sum for each one of them from the treasurer of the chapel."

"That ought to cover the expense of their food," said Helen, "but we'll have to have a housekeeper and a cook."

"That's what Aunt Louise said."

"Oho, you've been talking with Mother about it!" exclaimed Dorothy.

"I knew the Club would come to me sooner or later, it was only a matter of time, so I made ready to answer some of the questions you'd be asking me."

They laughed at Roger's preparedness, but nodded approvingly.

"Aunt Louise said she'd pay the wages of the cook, and then I toddled off to Grandmother Emerson and told her I was planning to raid her attic for old furniture, and asked her incidentally if she thought we could run the thing without a housekeeper."

"I hope she said 'yes,'" exclaimed Margaret, who liked to administer a household.

"Grandmother was very polite; she said she thought the U. S. C. could do anything it set out to do, but that there would be countless odds and ends that would occupy us all summer long —"

"Like making a continuous stream of furniture!"

"And going marketing and doing errands."

"And mowing the grass."

"And playing games with the kids."

"O, a thousand things would crop up; we never could be idle; and so she thought we'd better have a responsible woman as housekeeper. What's more she said she'd pay her."

"It wouldn't be polite for me to say about a lady what you said about Mr. Watkins," said James —

"For which I apologize," declared Roger parenthetically.

"— but I'd like to remark that she's one of the most reliable grandmothers I ever had anything to do with!"

They all laughed again.

"Where we'll get these two women I don't know," said Roger. "My researches stopped there. But I suppose it wouldn't be difficult."

"I've heard Mother say that the 'responsible woman' was the hardest person on earth to find," said Helen, thoughtfully. "But we can all hunt."

"I know some one who might do if she'd be willing — and I don't know why she wouldn't," said Ethel Brown.

"Who? Who? Some one in Rosemont?"

"Right here in Rosemont. Mrs. Schuler."

"Mrs. Schuler?"

There was a cry of wonder, for Mrs. Schuler was the teacher of German in the high school. She had been engaged to Mr. Schuler, who taught singing in the Rosemont schools, before the war broke out. Mr. Schuler was called to the colors and lost a leg in the early part of the war. Since he could no longer be useful as a fighter he had been allowed to return to America, and his betrothed had married him at once so that she and her mother, Mrs. Hindenburg, might nurse him back to health. He had been slowly regaining his strength through the winter, and was now fairly well and as cheerful as his crippled state would permit.

"You know I've been to see Mrs. Hindenburg a good deal ever since we got her to go to the Home to teach the old ladies how to knit," said Ethel Brown. "I know her pretty well now. The other day she told me she had had an application from a family who wanted to board with her this summer, and she was so sorry to have to turn them away because she didn't have enough rooms for them."

"I don't see how that helps us any."

"You know Mr. Schuler hasn't been able to take many pupils this winter and I shouldn't wonder if Mrs. Schuler would be glad to have something to do this summer when school is closed. Now if they would go to our Fresh Air house and take charge there for the summer it would leave Mrs. Hindenburg with enough space to take in her boarders. She'd be glad, and I should think the Schulers would be glad."

"And we'd be glad! Why, Fräulein is the grandest housekeeper," cried Helen, using the name that

Mrs. Schuler's old pupils never remembered to change to "Frau." "German housekeepers are thrifty and neat and careful — why, she's exactly the person we want. How *great* of you to think of her, Ethel Brown!"

"You know she wanted to adopt our Belgian baby, so I guess she's interested in poor children," volunteered Ethel Blue.

"Are our plans far enough along for us to ask her?" inquired Margaret.

"We ought to ask her as soon as we can, because Mrs. Hindenburg's plans will be affected by the Schulers' decision," Helen reminded them.

"I think we are far enough along," decided Roger. "You see, the idea is new to you, but I've been working at it for a good many months now, and if we all pull together to do our share I know we can depend on the grown-ups to do theirs."

"Shall we appoint Ethel Brown to call on Mrs. Schuler and talk it over with her? She knows her better than the rest of us because she's seen her at home oftener."

"Madam President, I move that Ethel Brown be appointed a committee of one to see our Teutonic friends and work up their sympathies over the women and children we want to help so that they just can't resist helping too. Is your eloquence equal to that strain, Ethel?"

Ethel thought it was, and promised to go the very next afternoon. The discussion turned to the next step to take.

"Grandfather's superintendent is going to move into the new cottage next week," was Roger's news, "so then we can go over the old house and see how

it is arranged and decide how we'd like to change it."

"And also find out just what furniture is left and draw up a list of what furniture we shall need."

"Had we better appoint committees for making the different investigations?" inquired Tom, who was accustomed to the methods of a city church.

"Later, perhaps," decided Helen. "At first I think we all want to know the whole situation and then we can make our plans to fit, and special people can volunteer for special work if we think it can be done best that way."

"It's a great old plan you have there, Roger," cried Tom, thumping his friend affectionately on the shoulder. "I bow to your giant intellect. We'll do our best to make it a success."

CHAPTER II

MOYA AND SHEILA

ELISABETH of Belgium was walking sturdily now on the legs that had been too weak to uphold her when she first came to Rosemont in November. Her increasing strength was an increasing delight to all the people who loved her — and there was no one who knew her who did not love her — but her activity obliged her caretakers to be incessantly on the alert. Miss Merriam, the skilled young woman from the School of Mothercraft, who had pulled her through her period of greatest feebleness, now found herself sometimes quite outdone by the energy of her little charge.

The Ethels were always glad to relieve her of her responsibilities for an hour or two, and it was the afternoon of the day after Roger had reported his plan to the Club that found the cousins strolling down Church Street, "Ayleesabet" between them, clinging to a finger of each, not to help her stand upright but to serve as a pair of supports from which she might swing herself off the ground.

"See! She lifted her whole weight then!" exclaimed Ethel Blue. "We shall have to give up calling her 'baby' soon. She's becoming an acrobat!"

"It's all due to Miss Merriam. I wish she didn't look so tired the last few days."

Ethel Blue made no reply. She guessed some-

thing of the reason that had made Miss Gertrude appear distressed and silent. A certain note that she herself had placed in a May basket and hung on Miss Merriam's door might have something to do with her appearance of anxiety. She changed the subject as a measure of precaution, for she had been in the confidence of Dr. Watkins, the elder brother of Tom and Della and a warm admirer of Miss Merriam's, and she did not want the conversation to run into channels where she might have to answer inconvenient questions.

"This scheme of Roger's is pretty tremendous," she began by way of introducing a theme in which Ethel Brown would be sure to be interested.

"I believe the Club will put it through. We never have failed yet in anything we've undertaken."

"We've never undertaken anything so big. Still, we *want* to do it, so I guess we shall. Don't you think you almost always do what you want *awfully* to do?"

"Perhaps so. It may be because you work awfully hard to bring it about."

"I suppose that has something to do with it; but somehow," went on Ethel Blue shyly, "I feel as if it was just as the Bible says, 'ask and ye shall receive.' If you ask hard enough for something it comes to you — or something of the same kind comes."

"I don't believe anything comes to you if you just *ask* and don't *do*," returned practical Ethel Brown, "but I shouldn't wonder if you *did* things all the time to bring about what you want, even if you aren't conscious of working directly for that object."

"It must be so. Take Elisabeth's coming, for instance."

"We asked for her fast enough."

"We didn't really expect her to come, though, and yet our minds were ready for her when she did come. We were all prepared to love her and care for her and we wanted tremendously to help the war orphans, so didn't we ask and work, too?"

"We worked our minds — yes. And after she came we worked our fingers," grinned Ethel Brown reminiscently. "I suspect we're both right. With most of the affairs the Club has put through we've all wished earnestly for success and we've done the best we knew how to bring about success. That's why I think we'll carry out this plan of Roger's."

"Anyway, we mustn't be timid about it. We must believe that we can attend to everything all right. Aunt Marion always says that a lack of self-confidence is responsible for a lot of damage in the world."

"I noticed after I heard her say that once. Don't you know how scared I used to be about reciting? I used to be afraid I wasn't going to remember or that I'd have stage fright or something would go wrong, and very often just those things happened. Then I began to say to myself that I'd recited a great many times and that I ought to be used to standing up before people, and that I had a pretty good memory, and that even if anything did go wrong I'd be like those people you read about in the paper who go right on singing when there's an alarm of fire, and calm the audience. And after I'd recited a good many times more and nothing had happened then I began to believe that nothing was going to happen

or that if anything did happen I'd be able to meet it somehow."

"You certainly have improved. Nothing upsets you now."

"Dorothy feels the same way about her singing. Every time she sings and does it well it gives her courage to do better the next time."

"I guess that's what Margaret and Helen mean when they say that they aren't afraid to try almost any sort of sewing. You know when they first took lessons last summer at Chautauqua they didn't dare attempt anything without letting their teacher see it first, and talking it over with her. Now they design new things and cut and fit clothes and they're really successful because they have self-confidence."

"We — the Club, I mean — never has 'fallen down' yet on anything, even some of our 'shows' that we didn't have much time to get up, so we ought to have confidence in ourselves as a Club."

"With this next undertaking, though, we don't really know how the thing is done."

"How to make over the house, you mean?"

"How to make over the house and how to run the Fresh Air settlement when the house is made over."

"There's no doubt we'll know more at the end of the summer than we know now! We've got to get information from every source we can."

"The way Roger has up to now."

"We must think of every one we know who has made over a house, and Dr. Watkins ought to be able to tell us of some people who have had Fresh Air children staying with them, so we can get some

idea about what they need and how a house is managed."

"There's one thing about our Fresh Air people that will make it easier than most of the Fresh Air farms — they'll stay a long time, so they'll all make one big family, and there won't be constant change."

"I don't know whether that will be better or worse. Sometimes people don't like each other and if they get very well acquainted they feel free to quarrel, and they wouldn't if they were just going to make a short visit. They'd be on their best behavior then."

"If there are any children big enough it may work out so. I suppose Fresh Air boys are on their best behavior if they know they'll only stay a short time, and it may be impossible for them to be good for a long time."

"We want to help mothers with little children, so I guess we shan't be bothered with many boys big enough to be troublesome. Anyway, we ought to get all the information we can about everything that's likely to come up, because you can't do any work really well without knowing how — that stands to reason."

"That's why I didn't suggest that the women do the cooking for the household. We might save money if they did."

"We might save dollars, but we wouldn't do as much good. If we have a cook who knows about foods the way Miss Merriam does — what ones are the most nourishing and what ones are suited to different troubles — we're going to send those women and children back to town almost fat!"

"Like Ayleesabet. The women can help in other parts of the work, though."

"They'd find it dull if they didn't have something to do. I dare say some of them will want to learn how to cook and how to do things in the best way."

"*I* dare say a lot of them will think that old married women like them can't be taught anything new, so they won't want to learn."

"We won't force them to learn, then; but if they see things done in a fashion that brings good results they'll be learning, whether they know it or not."

"We don't want them to think that we've got them there and we're going to take the opportunity to teach them. That would make almost anybody mad."

"It would me. Let's just make them feel that we want them to have a good time — which is the truth — and then if we can teach them things 'on the side,' all right."

"The way we've learned lots of things about the care of babies from Miss Merriam and Elisabeth."

"We must work up amusements. The youngsters will play all day long out of doors and we shan't have to worry about them, but the mothers will miss all the excitement of the city and the movie shows, so we'll have to give them some entertainment once in a while."

"We'll have to do that more with these long-staying people than with ones who stayed only a week or two. I dare say plenty of ideas will come to us."

"Come, come." A chirp rose from near the ground. Ayleesabet was tired of being disregarded for so long.

"You blessed Lamb!" cried Ethel Blue. "Did you say, 'Come, come,' just because you heard it? Did you think we were talking very learnedly about things we didn't know much about! Never mind, ducky daddles, we'll know a lot about them six months from now!"

"Just the way we've learned a lot about babies in the last six months from this little teacher!" added Ethel Brown.

"Come, come. Home, home," remarked Elisabeth insistently.

"What's the matter? Are your leggies tired? Want the Ethels to carry you?"

Elisabeth made it known that she would like some such method of transportation, and sat joyfully on a "chair" which the two girls made by interclasping their wrists.

Not for long did this please her ladyship.

"Down, down," she demanded in a few minutes.

"We might as well go home if she's too tired to walk and too restless to ride," decided Ethel Brown, and they turned about, to the evident pleasure of the baby.

As they were returning along Church Street but were still at a distance from Dorothy's house Elisabeth suddenly gave a chirrup of delight. The Ethels looked about to see the cause of this unexpected expression of joy. Crawling out through a hedge on to the sidewalk was a child of about Elisabeth's age, but a thin and dirty little mite, with a face that betrayed her race as Irish.

"What's this morsel doing here all by herself!" exclaimed Ethel Blue.

"She must have run away; or perhaps she isn't alone. Let's look about for her mother."

Up and down the street they looked while Elisabeth scraped acquaintance with the sudden arrival upon her path. The two children faced each other, making indefinite noises, and then each stretched out a hand and grasped a hand of the other.

"The darling things! Look at them!" said Ethel Blue.

"I hate to have Ayleesabet touch that dirty little paw, but I don't like to stop such friendliness," wavered Ethel Brown.

"I don't see a soul in sight. How do you suppose she ever got tangled up in the hedge?"

"What are we going to do about her?"

"We'll have to take her home and send Roger out to start a search for her mother."

"It doesn't seem as if she could be far off."

In truth she was not far off, for as the girls wondered and exclaimed a weak voice made itself heard from the other side of the hedge.

"Don't take her away," it said.

The girls looked at each other, startled and rather timid about investigating this sudden cry.

"We'd better look through," suggested Ethel Blue.

"She may be ill," added Ethel Brown.

Leaving the children to entertain each other on the sidewalk they enlarged the hole from which the new baby had crawled, and pushed their way through it. On the ground behind the hedge, and hidden from the sidewalk by its thick twigs lay a young woman, so pale that she frightened the girls.

"Don't take the baby away. I'll feel better in a little while. She crept off from me."

"How did you get here?" asked Ethel Brown.

"I came out from New York to look for work in the country. I felt so sick I lay down here."

"Did you get any work?"

A slight movement of the head indicated that she had not. The Ethels consulted each other by disturbed glances. There was no hospital nearer than Glen Point, and indeed, the woman seemed so ill that they did not see how she could reach the hospital even in the trolley.

As they stood silent and perplexed the honk of a motor roused the almost unconscious woman.

"Is the baby in the street?" she inquired frantically.

Ethel Brown crushed her way through the hedge, and found that the children were still on the sidewalk, but were so near its edge that the driver of the car had tooted to warn them back. To her delight she saw that the driver was Grandfather Emerson. She waved her hand to stop him.

"You're a great caretaker!" he cried. "Why do you leave Elisabeth to look after herself in this fashion? And who's her friend?"

Ethel climbed into the machine beside him and told of the discovery that the girls had just made. Mr. Emerson drew the car alongside the curb and jumped out with anxiety written on his face. The hole in the hedge was too small for him to push through so he ran around the end, and approached the prostrate form of the woman.

Her eyes were closed and she lay so still that

Ethel Blue, who was rubbing her hands, shook her head as she glanced up gratefully at the new arrival.

"What's this, what's this?" asked Mr. Emerson in his full, rich voice. Its mere sound seemed to carry comfort to the poor creature lying at his feet. He knelt beside her. "Hungry, eh?" he asked. "We'll see about that right off. Can you eat these cookies?" He took a thin tin box out of his pocket and opened it. "I have a little granddaughter named Ethel Brown who insists on my keeping cookies in my pocket all the time so that I can eat them when I'm driving. See if you can take a bite of this."

Ethel Brown placed her arm under the woman's head and lifted it and her grandfather held the cooky before the half-closed eyes. The lips moved.

"The baby," she murmured.

"The baby's on the other side of the hedge making friends with our baby," he explained. "She seems better off than you are. I suspect you've given her all the food you've had lately."

A fluttering hand took the cooky and put it between the pale lips.

"That's right," encouraged Grandfather. "Now try another. Just one more. That's good. Now if you thought you could stand and walk a few steps we'd get round the end of this hedge and gather up the babies and all get into the car and go somewhere where we could find something you'd like better than cookies."

Helped by the girls the woman struggled to her feet and stood wavering before she tried to take a step. She was a young woman with very black hair and gray-blue eyes and a face that was meant to be

unlined and pretty and not gaunt with hunger and furrowed by anxiety.

"You're very good," she whispered feebly.

Supported on each side she managed to reach the sidewalk, where she looked about wildly for her baby. An expression that was sad but infinitely relieved came over her features when she saw the two children sitting in the gravel of the walk filling their tiny hands with pebbles.

"A cooky won't hurt the baby either," decided Mr. Emerson, and he gave one to each of the children.

The Ethels had no chance to ask him what he meant to do without their discovery hearing them, so they helped the woman into the machine, put in the two children and climbed in themselves. To their great interest Mr. Emerson turned the car about and headed it for his own home.

"I wonder what Grandmother will say," murmured Ethel Brown to Ethel Blue, who was steadying the ill woman's head as it lay against the back of the seat.

Ethel Blue lifted her eyebrows to indicate that she could not guess; but both girls knew in their hearts that Mrs. Emerson would do what was wisest and for the best good of the strays. She came to the door in answer to the sound of the horn.

"How did you get back so soon?" she began to inquire of her husband when her eyes fell on the passengers in the car.

"An accident?" she asked anxiously as she ran down the steps.

"The girls found this woman and her child part way over here and I thought I'd better bring her on

and get your opinion about her. I think she'd like something to eat," and the kind old gentleman smiled in friendly fashion as the woman opened frightened eyes at the sound of a new voice.

Among them they succeeded in getting her into the house and into a cool room, where she lay exhausted on the bed, her hand holding tight to the little hand of her baby, lying wearily beside her.

"Sunstroke?" asked Grandmother.

"Hunger," replied Mr. Emerson, and he and Ethel Brown went down stairs at once in search of food, while Mrs. Emerson and Ethel Blue managed to undress their patient and put her into a fresh nightdress and bathe her face and hands. By the time they had done this and were undressing the baby, Ethel Brown and Mrs. Emerson's cook were at the door with jellied broth, milk, gruel and a cooling drink.

Ethel Blue fed the woman, spoonful by spoonful, and Ethel Brown gave the baby alternate spoonfuls of gruel and milk.

"Sleepy now?" asked Mrs. Emerson when the dark head sank back on the pillow. "Take a nap, then. See, the baby is right here where you can lay your hand on her. We'll look in now and then and just as soon as you wake up you must take some more food."

"Must!" repeated the girl, for she was hardly older than Miss Merriam they saw when her hair was pushed back from her face. "Must! 'Tis *glad* I'll be to be doing it!" and a ghost of a smile fluttered her lips.

Outside of the bedroom door Mrs. Emerson asked for an explanation and the others for her advice.

" I don't see how we can tell what we can do until we pull her through this trouble and find out what the poor soul wants to do herself."

" She said she came out from New York to look for work in the country."

" Then we must find her work in the country. But the first thing for us to attend to is to get her poor body into such a condition that she can work. She's a sweet looking young woman. I'm glad you brought her home, Father," and between Mr. and Mrs. Emerson there passed a smile of such understanding as makes beautiful the lives of people long and happily married.

CHAPTER III

THE FARMHOUSE

IT took a long time to bring Moya Murphy and little Sheila back to health and strength, but it was only a day or two before Moya was able to tell her story to Mrs. Emerson.

She was twenty-five, she said, and she had come to America with her father and mother five years before. The New World had not given a warm welcome to the new arrivals, for both of the parents had fallen ill with pneumonia only a few weeks after they landed, and both died within a few days of each other.

Moya, left alone and grieving, had soon after married Patrick Murphy, a lad she had known in the old country. A happy life they led, especially after little Sheila came to bless them.

When the declaration of war in Europe upset business conditions in America, Patrick lost his "job" and all summer long he walked the streets, working for a day now and then, but never securing a permanent position, and always growing weaker and less able to work because he was underfed. The little three-room flat that had been such a joy to them, had long been given up and they lived and ate and slept in one room, and thanked their stars that they had a landlord who did not insist on being paid regularly, as did some they knew about who put their

tenants out on the street if the rent was not forthcoming promptly.

"Somehow it's the sudden things that happens to me," said Moya to Mrs. Emerson. She was sitting on the latticed back porch of the Emersons' house, her fingers busy shelling peas for Kate, the old cook who had lived with Mrs. Emerson ever since she was married. "Patrick was crossing the street—'tis only six weeks ago, but it seems years! An automobile wid one of the shrieking horns screamed at him. 'Twas the policeman on the crossing told me. Patrick was light on his feet always, but that was when he had enough to eat ivery day. He thried to jump back and his foot slipped and he fell under the car and it killed him."

She sobbed and Mrs. Emerson and Kate wiped their eyes.

"Two days it was before I knew it; there was nothing on his clothes to tell who he was, and I only found out when he didn't come home and I went to the police and they took me to the Morgue and there he lay. They gave me twenty dollars — the policemen did. They collected it among themselves."

"Didn't they arrest the driver of the car?"

"'Twas a light car and it sped away before any one saw the number."

Kate Flanigan gave a grunt of disgust at the brutality of the driver.

"I gave the landlord half the money the policemen gave me. I owed it for the rint. Then I set out to hunt work. Ivery day I walked and walked and ivery day I carried the baby, for where could I leave her? Nobody wanted a girl who wasn't trained to do anything, and even if I had been able

to do something well they wanted no baby. There's no room for babies when you have to work," she said bitterly.

Mrs. Emerson caressed Sheila's head, as red as her father's and as curly.

"And me growing so ragged I didn't blame them for turning me off. A cent a day I spent for the newspaper and I read the list marked 'Help Wanted.' But there were few that wanted help and none that wanted the likes of me. All the time I saw Sheila growing thinner and thinner, and I knew it was the littleness of his food that had cost Patrick his life, and here was the baby starving, too, and I was fair distracted."

"'Tis the hard life ye've had," sympathized Kate.

"Do you remember how hot it was on May Day? 'Twas a furnace, that day! And Sheila here, it wilted her like a flower! Ah, the poor little colleen! She lay in me arms like she was dying for air, and what could I do! Not a stick was there in me room; the last chair I sold that day and a quarter was all I had after the rint man came round. I felt the baby must have the air of the country or she'd die in me arms. I hardly knew what I did, but I found mesilf on the ferry and I thanked God when the breeze made her lift her head the first time for hours. A woman gave me a bottle of milk! 'Twill not keep till I get home,' she said, 'and me bye's had enough.' Her baby wanted more — he stretched out his hand for the bottle, but he had had some — I saw him — and my girl was starving. She saw it — the kind woman!"

Again Mrs. Emerson and Kate wiped their eyes.

"On the Jersey side of the river I got into the

first trolley I came to — I didn't know where any of them went. The baby lifted her dear red curly head wid iv'ry mile we got away from the town. Twice we changed until we got here and I was afraid to go on for 'twould leave me without a nickel."

"This was on May Day?"

"May Day it was. From house to house I went asking for work, and sometimes they shut the door hard and sometimes they took a look at the baby and admired her hair and then sent me away, but never one gave me work or food."

"Poor child!"

"The last of me money I spent on milk for the baby — a can of condensed milk, for it would last longer — and some crackers."

"Where did you sleep?"

"In the field where the young ladies found me. All the night I lay there and all the day wid the sun burning down on me. The baby I pushed under the hedge in the shade. 'Twas when I was in a kind of a doze-like she crept through the hedge and the Miss Ethels saw her."

"I want you to feel that you are safe here, you and Sheila," said Mrs. Emerson gently. "Mrs. Morton and Mrs. Smith and I have been talking it over with Kate, and this is what we've planned, provided you agree."

Moya gathered up her baby jealously in her lap.

"It will keep you and Sheila together," said Mrs. Emerson quickly, noticing her gesture, and smiling approvingly as Moya at once let the child slide off her lap on to the floor where she sat contentedly playing with some of the pods of the peas that had fallen from the pan.

"Perhaps Kate has told you that we are planning to have some women and children who need country air come out from New York this summer and live in a farmhouse that we have on the place here."

Moya nodded. "She did."

"We need a cook. We are going to give them simple food, but nourishing and well cooked."

"If it's me you're thinking of for the cooking, ma'am, I'm a poor cook beyond potaties and stew."

"You never were taught to cook?"

"Taught? No, ma'am. I picked up what little I know from me mother. 'Tis simple enough, but too simple for what you need."

"If you'll try to learn, here's what we've planned. Kate needs a helper. Not because she isn't strong and hearty, but because Mr. Emerson and I want her to have a little more time for pleasure than she has had for a good many years. She won't take a real vacation, so we are going to give her a partial vacation."

"Me being the helper?" inquired Moya, her thin face lighting.

"More than the helper. Kate has agreed to teach you how to cook all the dishes that it will be necessary to cook for the women and children this summer. You couldn't have a better teacher."

"I'm sure of it," answered the young woman, turning gratefully to Kate. "I'll do my very best."

"You shall have a room for yourself and the baby, and wages," and she named a sum that made Moya's eyes burn.

"I'm not worth that yet," she cried, "but I know you'll need me to dress respectable, so I'll not refuse

it and I'll get some decent things for the baby and mesilf!"

"If Kate finds that you take hold well she'll teach you more elaborate cooking. There's always a place waiting somewhere for a good cook, and here's your chance to learn to be a really excellent cook."

So the problem of obtaining a cook was settled without trouble, and as Ethel Brown found Mrs. Schuler not only ready but eager to act as Matron, two of the possible difficulties seemed to have proved themselves no difficulties at all.

Moya and Kate went with the Club to the farmhouse a fortnight later when the superintendent had moved out and the young people gathered to go over the house and make a start upon their plans. She made her way at once to the kitchen and gazed about her with delight.

"It's iligant!" she exclaimed. "'Tis like me grandmother's kitchen in the ould country wid the sun shining in all the morning and a door opening right on to the yard wid the hens pecking around. It's me and Sheila will be happy all day here," and she beamed affectionately at the Ethels, who had gone into the back of the house with her.

In the yard Elisabeth and Sheila continued their acquaintance. Roger sat down on a bench beside the door to watch the progress of their friendship. Sheila showed an unconquerable curiosity concerning Elisabeth's legs whose girth was far greater than that of her own slender spindles. Whenever she came near Elisabeth she stooped and ran her hand up and down the sturdy props that appeared below the little Belgian's rompers. Elisabeth did not seem

at all annoyed, but she always reciprocated by seizing Sheila's crop of flaming hair and giving it a vigorous pull. The initial proceedings over, they toddled on about their affairs, and chatted incessantly to each other in a language of their own invention, which seemed to answer all needful purposes of communication, though no one but themselves understood more than an occasional word. Roger and the Ethels laughed affectionately at the manœuvres of the babies and then went back into the house.

" Keep an eye on those children, Moya," directed Ethel Brown, " and talk over with Kate what you need here in the kitchen. The carpenters are coming to-morrow and they'll put up any extra shelves."

" Mrs. Allen is a good housekeeper," said Kate, referring to the overseer's wife.

" So I've heard Grandmother say, but Moya will have to cook for a larger family, so she'll need more shelf room and perhaps more low shelves — hinged ones, you know — that can be used for tables."

Kate and Moya both nodded understandingly, and turned to the examination of the kitchen as the Ethels followed Roger to the front room.

To the Morton young people the old house had almost as much novelty as to the Hancocks, the Watkinses and Miss Merriam. It was the homestead of the Emersons, Mrs. Morton's family, but no member of the family had lived in it for over fifty years. Tenants and overseers of the farm had occupied the rooms where once the colonial women had spun their yarn and woven their cloth, and where, later, the men had cleaned their long rifles to give a warm reception to the British soldiers of the Revolutionary days at the battles of Monmouth and Tren-

ton and Princeton. The house had been kept in good repair, but its low ceilings and panelled walls and the worn planks of its floors betrayed its age while they lent an old-time charm to a dwelling surrounded by the conditions of a twentieth century farm so well-ordered and so modern in all its equipment that Mr. Emerson had felt that he must provide his overseer with a modern house to match the rest.

"This must have been a whale of a house for a colonial farmhouse," commented James, from his station at the front door, where he could look through the wide hall and the back door to the sun-filled back yard where Elisabeth and Sheila sat on the ground facing each other and tossing handfuls of gravel at a too inquisitive rooster who came up to investigate these newcomers to his precincts.

"This right-hand side was all that was built for two generations," explained Mr. Emerson. "This front room was the living room and the kitchen behind it was always a kitchen. Stairs went up from the kitchen to the rooms above."

"Do you know when the left side was put on?"

"Before the Revolution. A son of the house was married and the father wanted him to live at home and continue to help with the farm, so he enlarged the house as you see it now."

"He just about doubled it."

"More than doubled it, because there are as many rooms on that side as this plus this hall between. There have been changes upstairs, partitions taken down so as to make larger bedrooms, but none down here."

"We may need those partitions put back again,"

said Helen. "Let's decide how we shall use these rooms."

"The kitchen for the kitchen, without any question," said Roger.

"And this room right in front of it with a door between, for the dining-room."

"Now about the rooms on the other side of the hall. The front one for a sitting room?"

"If you'll take my advice," suggested Mr. Emerson, "you'll let the Schulers have the back one. Mr. Schuler won't want to be going over the stairs any more than he can help with that leg of his."

"Or that no-leg," corrected Roger. "All right, let's mark that 'Schuler' on Ethel Blue's plan here. Shall she put 'Sitting-room' on this front one?"

"I don't want to interfere too often — but your Matron ought to have a sort of office, and it ought to be down stairs where she is convenient to the kitchen and the doors and so on."

"But if we make that front room the office what shall we do for a sitting-room?" asked Ethel Blue, holding up her plan for critical inspection.

"The women won't be in the house an awful lot," said Margaret. "They'll sit in that grove over there and stay out in the air."

"There ought to be some gathering place for them in the evening," urged Della, "and those city women aren't accustomed to being out of doors and they'll like to stay in the house more than you realize."

"But they're coming for the purpose of being out of doors," remonstrated Ethel Brown. "They ought not to be in the house any more than they can help."

"You can't boss them, though," interposed Tom. "You've got to make out-of-doors so attractive to them that they'll want to stay out. Put seats in the grove and in shady places so that they can sit and sew and talk and watch the kids play. They're used to a lot of people about, you know. You've got to take that into account."

"They'll need to have a sitting-room in the evenings and on rainy days," urged Della again. "Why couldn't this big hall be fitted up for a sitting-room? In the daytime it's light enough with the doors open at both ends, and it's wide enough for plenty of furniture to go in."

"For more furniture than we've got, by a long shot!" exclaimed Roger.

"We'll get enough furniture," promised Dorothy, who felt experienced in the construction of furniture because she had furnished an attic out of nothing at all, according to her own description.

"We're relying on you for ideas," returned Helen.

"Is this settled, then?" asked Ethel Blue, holding up her plan. "Front room, right, dining room; back room, right, kitchen; front room, left, office; back room, left, Mrs. Schuler; hall to be turned into a sitting room."

"That's correct," aproved Roger. "Let's go upstairs," and he led the way over the staircase whose balustrade with its delicately turned spindles had been copied by Mr. Emerson when he built the new house in which he lived. "Four rooms up here, and a bathroom and a linen closet," announced Roger, "and a wide hall that we can utilize somehow."

"Why not put in a partition across this front part of the hall and make a room of it?" inquired Ethel Blue. "It would do for Moya and Sheila, and it has as large a window as any of the other bedrooms."

"They aren't much for size, that's the truth," commented Roger. "I should strangle with such portholes in my room."

"The way they get around that at Chautauqua," said James, whose father owned three cottages there, and who consequently had been observant of the ways employed by summer residents to make themselves comfortable, "is to take out the sashes entirely."

"What happens when a storm comes up?" inquired Miss Merriam.

"There are the outside shutters."

"Let's do that, then," consented Tom. "Anyway, if we don't, Miss Merriam will have a hard time to make the women keep their windows open at night. If there aren't any sashes the difficulty will be solved."

"I'll second that motion," agreed Miss Merriam, who had offered to give talks on hygiene and sanitation and ventilation to the inmates of the Farm.

"Are you prepared to meet the remonstrances of the victims?"

"To meet the remonstrances and convince the victims," returned Miss Merriam with a smile.

"All right, out they go," declared Roger, and he made a notation in a blank book that he had brought for the purpose of jotting down any changes that might be decided upon. The new partition was already marked.

"Are four bedrooms — five bedrooms — going to be enough for us?" he asked.

"Moya's room will be only large enough for her and Sheila, but these others will hold a mother and at least two children — three at a pinch," decided Helen.

"Counting three in a room, that would be twelve in the four; fourteen with Moya and Sheila, and sixteen counting the two Schulers," computed James. "I should say that's all we'd better try to handle."

The Ethels looked at each other with dismayed expressions.

"Sixteen sounds an awful lot when you think of what it all means!" Ethel Blue said in an undertone.

"We'll manage it with what Mr. Watkins's church contributes and what our own grown-ups give. Don't get scared at this stage of things!"

"I'm not. It was just facing that number for the first time."

Mr. Emerson went over Roger's notebook with his grandson when they went down stairs.

"There isn't as much for the carpenters to do as I thought," he said. "Only one partition to put up, the sashes to be taken out, a new bathroom to be put in on the ground floor —"

"Probably some shelves for Moya in the kitchen —"

"A lot of shelves for various purposes all over the house," interposed Dorothy. "Shelves answer a multitude of purposes."

"You shall have all you want, my dear. But even with shelves bristling from every wall there isn't enough for the fortnight's work that I prom-

ised you, so I think we'd better put on a veranda on the north side of the house. It needn't be handsomely finished, but it can have a roof so that it will serve as a shelter on showery days and it can be made wide enough to serve as an extra room."

"You're a perfect darling!" cried Dorothy, throwing her arms around his neck.

"If there should be a door cut through from the dining-room it could be used for out-of-door meals," exclaimed Ethel Blue.

"And the babies can have their naps there," cried Ethel Brown.

"And the women can have afternoon tea there," said Della, dancing a few steps of the butterfly dance. Her example inspired the Ethels and they marched up and down the hall with the "One, two, three, back" step that had been their expression of extreme pleasure ever since their babyhood.

At this moment of exaltation a roar from the backyard sent Miss Merriam flying through the back door of the hall to see what was the matter with Elisabeth. She encountered Moya, who dashed out of the kitchen door at the same moment. Their faces softened into laughter at the sight that met their eyes. The babies were clasped in an embrace of infantile ferocity, Sheila pinching Ayleesabet's fat leg with her ever-strengthening fingers and Ayleesabet clutching Sheila's red mop with a strangle hold.

"'Tis the fighter ye are like your granddad!" exclaimed Moya, tearing her howling offspring from Elisabeth's grasp.

"Elisabeth, being a Belgian, is 'some' fighter, too," commented Roger as he lifted her from the ground and put her in Miss Merriam's arms.

CHAPTER IV

PLANS

THE work of the carpenters filled in very acceptably the time when the members of the Club were toiling at school. All the boys except the honorary member, Dicky, were to enter college next autumn. Fortunately for the outcome of the summer campaign at Rose House, as they determined to call the farmhouse, their "finals" were taken comparatively early in June, and after those were in the background the school work was so little demanding that these senior members of the U. S. C. were enabled to apply themselves almost every day to the preparation of the house.

Another visit of inspection toward the end of June gave the onlookers the greatest satisfaction. The partition upstairs had made a charming little room for Moya and Sheila. New floors had been laid in several of the rooms down stairs where the old planks were worn into grooves and so roughened as to promise danger to infant knees from splinters. The veranda was a joy — wide, roofed half way over, so that the rooms behind it might not be too seriously darkened and also that it might offer an unsheltered edge for those who liked to see the sky over their heads. The piazza turned the corner and ran across the front of the house, unroofed. A huge rosebush that had climbed around the front door had been uprooted and re-planted at the corner

of the new veranda, and its blossom-laden branches gave the name to the house.

Strips of " chicken wire " about a foot wide ran up each post of the porch and shrubs and vines were transplanted so that there might be no look of barrenness, even at first. Behind the house vine-covered lattices shut off the clothes-drying yard from the grass plot, and the hens were removed to a yard of their own at a distance. A shed attached to the rear of the house was fitted with windows, tubs and running water, to serve as a laundry. The brook that crossed the lane leading to the pasture ran through the flower and vegetable gardens that the Ethels had planted.

Grandfather Emerson's promise of as many shelves as Dorothy wanted had been fulfilled. Moya had shelves to her entire satisfaction in the kitchen. In the hall-sitting-room shelves on each side served as writing desks. Others answered the purpose of tables. In the bedrooms banks of shelves rose as substitutes for bureaus, and a shelf made an excellent dressing table. In the absence of the ancestral wardrobes, long shelves, placed high, provided with clothes hooks underneath, and to be bordered, when furnishing time should come, with gay curtains, took the place of closets. On other shelves stood wash bowls and pitchers.

" It's only by what is placed on it that you can tell a wash stand from a writing desk," laughed Mr. Emerson when he went through the house, but he admired the simplicity of Dorothy's invention and himself ordered shelf tables to be placed against the wall on the veranda. He had already contributed a tool chest and a workbench for carpentering operations.

"Everything is as fine as a fiddle!" exclaimed Roger as they all stopped in one of the upstairs rooms after a tour of inspection. "Now it's up to us to do the papering and painting and to concoct some furniture."

"If you follow up Dorothy's good beginning you'll have a house that country life enthusiasts will come miles to see," laughed Mrs. Morton.

"I've got something more than shelves up my sleeve, if the boys will help," promised Dorothy.

"The boys will help," answered Tom. "Meanwhile the boys had better get busy with the paint brush and the kalsomine bucket, I opine."

"'Opine' meaning?"

"Nothing but 'think.' I wish I could come out every day; I feel as if I weren't doing my share."

"You can't come all the way from New York every day, of course. But you do such a lot when you do come that you almost put a week in a Saturday."

"James does an awful lot, too," said Ethel Blue, who wanted to be entirely impartial, and give James the praise that was due him for coming from Glen Point as frequently as he did.

"I think I can come every other afternoon from now on," decided James. "I'll try, anyway."

"Can we decide about the coloring now?" asked Margaret.

"Let's have the bedrooms lovely spotless white," suggested Helen, "walls whitewashed and curtains white, and white beds and chairs — O, it *will* be lovely."

"I don't believe I agree with you," asserted Miss Merriam.

"O, Miss Gertrude, why not?" inquired Helen, disappointed.

"Patients who have had to stay a long time in a hospital have told me that the spotless whiteness of everything tired them."

"Sort of kept them on the stretch to keep up to it, eh?" guessed Tom.

"Perhaps so. Or the glare tired their eyes, or the monotony tired their minds. At any rate I think we ought to think twice before we do all the bedrooms in white."

"I thought it would be such a contrast to their regular rooms," insisted Helen.

"It would — too much, perhaps."

"Do you know what the coloring of ever so many of the New York tenement rooms is?" inquired Della. "I've been into hundreds of them with Father, and they're usually a sort of robin's egg blue."

"That's a pretty shade."

"It is by itself, but the woodwork is usually dark and the combination is ugly —O, my!" and Della shrugged her plump shoulders in disgust at the thought of it.

"That very same shade isn't bad at all with white woodwork," said Miss Merriam. "I planned the re-decorating of a tenement room once. The wall was in pretty good condition, so I made the money go farther by only doing the woodwork and putting the remainder into a new piece of linoleum for the floor. But I had the wood painted white and the effect was really pretty. I chose a blue and white linoleum and put blue and white cotton curtains at the windows and it was as bright and cheerful a

kitchen as you'd want to see, whereas before it had been gloomy beyond words."

"You don't object to white paint, then?" inquired Helen.

"White paint would be charming with walls of different colors — pale blue and light gray and delicate yellow —"

"And pink."

"I don't advise pink."

"Don't advise pink! Pink is *so* pretty!"

"I like pink myself, but there are people who say that pink and red are exciting for weak eyes and delicate nerves, so it seems to me I should keep the pink for some room that isn't slept in — perhaps Mrs. Schuler's office, which isn't an office at all, but a room where the women will go to tell her their troubles and to ask her advice, and which should be just as bright and cheerful as it can be."

Helen liked that idea, too, so it was decided that all the bedrooms should have white paint and walls of delicate hues and that Mrs. Schuler's office should be pink with white paint and white curtains at the windows.

"We can get very pretty papers for ten cents a roll," said Margaret. "I saw some beauties when I went to the paperers to get some flowery papers for James to cut out when he was pasting decorations on to our Christmas Ship boxes."

"Are you going to use wall paper?" asked Miss Merriam quickly.

"Aren't we?" inquired Margaret. "It didn't occur to me that there was anything else. There is paper on the walls now."

"It's a lot more sanitary to have the walls kalso-

mined, I know that," said James in a superior tone. "Haven't you heard Father say so a dozen times?"

"I suppose I have, now I think about it," replied Margaret. "It stands to reason that there would be less chance for germs to hide."

"Do you suppose these old walls are in good enough condition to go uncovered?" asked Roger, passing his hand over a suspicious bulge that forced the paper out, and casting his eye at the ceiling which was veined with hair cracks.

"Probably the walls will not be in the pink of condition," returned Mrs. Morton; "but, even so, color-washing will be better than papering."

"We can go over them and fill up the cracks," suggested Tom, "and we can whitewash the ceilings."

"That's what I should advise," said Miss Merriam. "Put the walls and ceilings in as good condition as you can, and then put on your wash. Kalsomining is rather expensive, but there are plenty of color washes now that any one can put on who can wield a whitewash brush."

"Me for the whitewash brush at an early date," Roger sang gayly. "What do you suggest for these upstairs floors, Miss Merriam? Grandfather thought they weren't bad enough to have new ones laid, but they do look rather rocky, don't they?"

He cast a disparaging glance at the boards under his feet, and waited for help.

"Were you planning to paint them?"

"Yes," Roger nodded.

"Then you ought to putty up the cracks first. That will make them smooth enough. They're not really rough, you see. It's the spaces between the planks that make them seem so."

"That's easily done. We thought we'd paint these old floors and stain the new ones down stairs."

"I'd do that. Paint these floors tan or gray, if you want them to confess frankly that they're painted floors, or the shade of some wood if you want to pretend that they're hard wood floors."

"I'm afraid it would take more imagination than even Ethel Blue has to deceive you into thinking these floors were hard wood," laughed Ethel Brown, "but we can do some one way and some the other and see which effect we like best."

"Let's have all the woodwork white downstairs, too," said Helen. "My mind still runs to white, you see."

"There's nothing prettier for these rooms," said Mrs. Morton. "Make Moya's kitchen like the one Miss Merriam described, and freshen this panelling in the dining-room and hall, and nothing could be more suitable for Mrs. Schuler's two rooms. My advice to you, Roger, is to make the best bargain you can in white paint, and start in at once."

James moved uneasily. Roger guessed the reason.

"What's the matter, old man? Treasury low?"

"It always is," answered James uncomfortably. "How are we going to fill it?"

"That's what I've been thinking," Ethel Brown said meditatively. "It's time we did something to earn something."

"I kept up Aunt Louise's furnace and the Miss Clarks until they begged for mercy," laughed Roger who had earned money for the Club's work by taking care of several of the neighborhood furnaces during the winter. "All my customers are keeping

me on to cut their lawns, but Aunt Louise's lawn is only the size of a pocket handkerchief and the grass is the slowest growing stuff I ever did see so I'm not getting truly wealthy out of it."

"Margaret and I have gone into partnership and made all the Morton and Smith and Hancock summer dresses," explained Helen. "By the time we've finished them we shall have quite a sum, but we haven't reached that happy state yet."

"Everybody I've sold cookies to all winter seems to have stopped eating them," complained Ethel Brown. "I'm thinking of getting up a cooky sale to relieve my financial distress."

"There's an idea," cried Tom. "Why can't we have a cooky sale — with a few other things thrown in — and use the proceeds for the decoration and furnishing of Rose House?"

"We've had so many entertainments; can we do anything different enough for the Rosemonters to be willing to come?"

"And spend?"

"I think the Rosemonters have great confidence in our getting up something new and interesting; ditto the Glen Pointers," insisted Margaret who lived at Glen Point and knew the opinions of her neighbors.

"Where could we have it — *it* meaning our sale or whatever we decide to have?"

"Why not have it here? Let's wait until the boys have the house all painted and whitewashed and colorwashed so it looks as fresh as possible, and then tell the town what it is we are trying to do this summer, and ask them over here to see what it looks like."

"Good enough. When they see that it's good as

far as it goes, but that our Fresh Air people will be mighty uncomfortable if they don't have some beds to sleep in and a few other trifles of every day use, they'll buy whatever we have to sell. That's the way it seems to me," and Roger threw himself down on the grass before the front door with an air of having said the final word.

" Let's ask the people of *Rose*mont to come to *Rose* House to a *Rose* Fête," cried Ethel Blue, while every one of her hearers waved his handkerchief at the suggestion.

" I'll draw a poster with the announcement on it," she went on, " and we can have it printed on pink paper and the boys can go round on their bicycles and distribute them at every house."

" We must have everything pink, of course. Pink ice cream and cakes with pink icing —"

" And pink strawberries —"

" Not green ones! No, sir!"

" And watermelons if we can get some that won't make too much trouble for Dr. Hancock."

" How are we going to serve them? We can't bring china way out here — and we won't have any for Rose House until after we give this party to earn it!"

" They have paper plates with pretty patterns on them now. And if they cost too much we might get the plain ones and lay a d'oyley of pink paper on each one," suggested Margaret.

" Probably that will be the cheapest and the effect will be just as good, but I'll find out the prices in town," promised Della.

" I have a scheme for a table of fancy things," offered Dorothy. " Let's have it under that tree over

there and over it let's hang a huge rose. I think I know how to make it — two hoops, the kind Dicky rolls, one above the other, the smaller one on top,

The Fancy Table Under a Huge Rose.

and both suspended from the tree. Cover them inside and out with big pink paper petals."

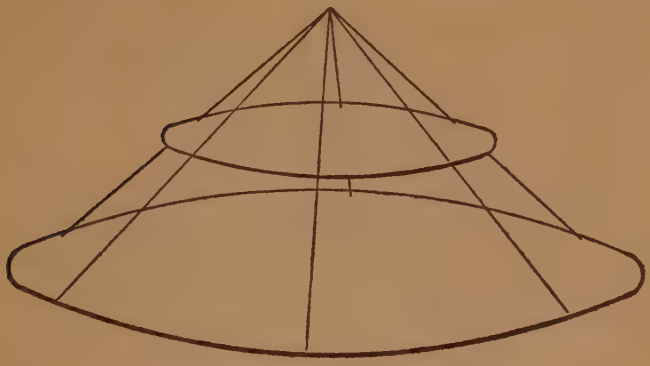
"How are you going to make it look like a rose and not a pink bell?" inquired Della.

"Put a green calyx on the top and some yellow

stamens inside and then make a stem that will look like the real thing, only gigantic."

"How will you manage that?"

"Do you remember those wild grape vines that Helen and Ethel Brown found in the West Woods and used for Hallowe'en decorations? If we could get a thick one and wind it with green paper and let



Framework for the Giant Rose.

it curve from the rose toward the ground it ought to look like a real stem."

"We could hang the rose with dark string that wouldn't show, and fasten the stem to the branch of the tree with a pink bow. It would look as if some giant had tied it there for his ladylove."

"I have an old pink sash I'll contribute to the good cause," laughed Helen. "I've been wondering what to do with it for some time."

"Everything on the table must be pink and shaped like a rose or decorated with roses — cushions, penwipers, baskets, stencilled bureau sets — there are a thousand things to be made."

"Boxes covered with rose paper," suggested James solemnly.

Everybody shouted, for James's imagination always seemed to be stimulated whenever he saw a chance to make something with paste-pot and brush.

"The table itself — and all the tables we serve the ice cream on, too — ought to be covered with pink."

"We can use plain pink paper on some, and pink petals on others and white paper decorated with roses on others still."

"We're talking a lot about tables — we haven't a single one. Where are we going to get them? We'll need a lot."

"If we use makeshift tables — boxes set up on end for instance — it will impress on the people who come that we really need tables, and they'll be more likely to help us than if they saw us using borrowed tables and imagined that some of them belonged to the house."

Dorothy made this suggestion and was applauded by the others.

"If they have to sit on boxes they'll be reminded that we need chairs," Dorothy continued.

"And if they go into the house and see that it is perfectly bare they'll realize that we aren't putting up a howl about nothing at all," concluded Roger.

This part of the arrangements was worked out in detail on the spot. Ethel Brown agreed to ask her grandfather for the use of one of the farm wagons to go to Rosemont and bring back a load of boxes of all sizes, not only those suitable for seats and tables but other larger ones which might be utilized later in some of Dorothy's plans. The grocer, the dry-

goods man and the shoe store man were all to be requisitioned for these.

"We'll buy a lot of pink stuff from the dry goods man so he'll be willing to sell us the boxes cheap or even give us some of them," she remarked hopefully.

"We'll have to go carefully over all those we use for tables and chairs and make sure that there aren't any nails sticking out. If any of our customers had their clothes torn they wouldn't be in the mood to help us any more."

"Why can't we have games over on that bit of lawn of Mr. Allen's? There's room enough there for tennis and for croquet too."

"And charge each person five cents a game for croquet and ten cents a set for tennis!"

"That's all right for the croquet, but a tennis set may have a dozen or more games and last an hour; better make it five cents a game for each player. That's fair."

"I'll bring over our net and marker and some racquets for people who come without any."

"How are they to know they ought to bring them?"

"Put it on Ethel Blue's poster, of course. We ought to list all our attractions — refreshments, fancy table, games — what else can we offer?"

"I'll tell fortunes again if you want me to," offered Dorothy who had acted as an Irish soothsayer at the Donnybrook Fair of the Rosemont Charitable Society on St. Patrick's Day.

"That ought to be done 'under the rose.' Can't we put you under the big rose and have the fancy table elsewhere?"

"That location is too open. Have Dorothy, all

dressed in rose color, in that rose jungle over there," said Ethel Blue, indicating a thicket of wild rose bushes near the prospective tennis court. "That will be a little more secluded for a heart-to-heart talk like prophesying the future."

"How do you do it, Dorothy?" asked Tom.

"Oh, I know who most of the people are, and what they're interested in, so I tell Adèle Strong that she'll be a great singer, and Hattie Perkins that she'll outdistance Michelangelo. They know it's all fooling, of course, but it amuses them, and nobody is deceived."

"Do you pretend to read their palms?"

"Sometimes. At the Donnybrook Fair I read it all from the veining of a shamrock. This time I can pull a rose to pieces and tell it from the petals."

"How about music?"

This question brought silence, for it was not easy to arrange for music in the open.

"I wish Edward and his violin were here," said Della, referring to her brother, Dr. Watkins, who had recently gone to Oklahoma to assist an older physician in a flourishing town there. He had been very attentive to Miss Merriam and she was annoyed to find herself blushing at the mention of his name. Ethel Blue, who had been in his confidence, was the only one of the young people who glanced at her, however, so her annoyance passed unnoticed.

"He isn't, and a piano is out of the question. I wonder if Greg Patton would bring his fiddle?"

"Why didn't we think of him before! He and some of the other high school boys have been getting up a little orchestra; I shouldn't wonder a bit if

they'd be glad to help — glad of the experience of playing in public."

"It would be great if they would. Let's make them put MacDowell's 'Wild Rose' on the program, and they could play for a rose dance of some sort. Can't we invent one?"

They had all been at Chautauqua the summer before and had learned various folk dances there, so they found no difficulty in re-arranging one of them and combining it with another into a dance whose graceful steps should be accompanied with the waving of branches of roses.

"We haven't got to make oceans of paper roses, this time," remarked Ethel Brown gratefully. "Nature is doing the work for us."

She waved her hand at the clump of bushes which was to conceal Dorothy's fortune telling operations, and which was pink with blossoms.

"Our bushes at home are loaded down with them, too," said Margaret. "Everybody's are, so I don't suppose it would be worth while to have a flower table."

"There's no harm in trying. We could say on the poster that exceptionally choice roses will be on exhibition and sale and — and why couldn't we take orders for the bushes? Use the beauties for samples and if people like them, get roots from the bushes they came from and supply them the next day!"

Ethel Blue was quite breathless with the force of this suggestion and the others applauded it.

"Just as I think of Ethel Blue as all imagination and dreams she comes out with something practical like that and I have to study her all over again,"

said Roger, observing his cousin with his head on one side. Ethel Blue threw a leaf at him which he dodged with exaggerated fear.

They decided to have the Rose Fête just as soon as the boys put the house into presentable condition, and then the girls separated, Ethel Brown and Dorothy to see Mr. Emerson about securing the boxes, Helen and Margaret to measure the windows for

They Converted Ordinary Chinese Lanterns Into Roses.

curtains, Della and Ethel Blue to work out the design for converting ordinary Chinese lanterns into roses which they had thought of as lending a charm to the veranda and the lawn after the sun went down, and the boys to calculate the quantities of putty and paint and color-wash, based on information given Roger by the local painter and decorator, who was quite willing to help with advice when he found that there was no chance of his own services being called into play.

Miss Merriam found Elisabeth playing amicably with Sheila in the kitchen. Gertrude absent-mindedly tied on her bonnet in preparation for the homeward trip.

"*I* wish Edward and his violin were here," she murmured to herself as she tucked her charge into the perambulator.

CHAPTER V

THE ROSE FÊTE

THE United Service Club had made so good a name for itself in Rosemont during the few months of its existence that when Ethel Blue's posters brought to their doors the news that the U. S. C. was to give a Rose Fête at Rose House the townspeople were eager to know what attraction the members had devised. The schools were still in session so the Ethels and Dorothy at the graded school and Helen and Roger and the orchestra boys at the high school made themselves into an advertising band and told everybody all about the purpose of the festival. The scholars carried the information home, and there were few houses in Rosemont where it was not known that Mr. Emerson's old farmhouse was to be turned into a summer home for weary mothers and ailing babies.

The response from the people was immediate. "May we help?" was a question asked one or another of the Club members every day, and James and Margaret reported that the Glen Point folk were equally responsive. The old ladies in the Home sent word to Ethel Brown that they would like to make a few articles for the fancy table if the materials could be supplied them, and Ethel at once bought several bolts of pink ribbon and a dozen chamois skins and Ethel Blue drew designs for pen

wipers and jewel boxes and eyeglass polishers and pen boxes and pin kits all to be made of the leather and ornamented each with a rose.

When Mrs. Schuler's friends learned that she was to be the Matron of the new enterprise and that the house was as yet destitute of furniture, they were eager to furnish her room comfortably, and came forward one after another with offers of loans of chairs and a bureau and tables. After talking with the girls, however, Mrs. Schuler refused such articles as would not be found in the other bedrooms of the house, saying that she did not want to be more comfortably equipped than the women under her care. Shelves made a good enough table and bureau for any one, she insisted, so she only accepted a bed and such chairs as would be comfortable for Mr. Schuler whose crippled state demanded something easier than a box for a seat.

Helen and Margaret, after consulting with their mothers and Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Emerson, had decided that a cot or single bed and two cribs ought to go in each bedroom except Moya's, where one crib would be enough. This meant that five beds and nine cribs must be provided, and the number made the girls look serious as they calculated the probable proceeds of the Rose Fête and subtracted from them the amount that they would have to pay the local furniture dealer, even though he, being a public spirited and charitable man, offered them a discount. For a day or two they went about in a state of depression, for they had hoped to be able to supply the furnishings without making any appeal to the grown-ups. Thanks to Dorothy they could discount any expense for bureaus and desks and tables, but their

ambition did not soar to constructing bedsteads; these had to be bought or given.

It became evident after a number of householders had inquired how they could help, that there was a chance that the U. S. C. treasury might not be reduced after all by the purchase of beds. When one lady was informed by Helen of their schemes for filling the rooms — how the carpenters had provided them with a table that would do for the dining room and how shelves innumerable were to do duty for innumerable purposes,— and she had added ruefully, " But we can't make very good beds, and we do want the women to sleep well, poor things. We've got to buy those —" she had cried, " Why, I have a cot in my attic that I should be *delighted* to let you have, and my daughter's little boy has outgrown his crib and I'm sure she'll contribute that."

A ray of hope shone on Helen. In Mrs. Morton's attic she knew there was nothing, for Dicky's crib had been turned over to Elisabeth, and there was only one cot, liable to be used in an emergency and hence not to be spared; but Mrs. Emerson's attic had not been ransacked for a long time, and she proceeded to perform that kindly act for her grandmother. A single bed, a crib and two chairs were the result of this raid. Mrs. Hancock promised a chair and an old sofa, so shabby that it would have to be re-covered but firm on its legs, and one, very weak on its legs, that might be made serviceable if the boys would strengthen it.

Some one else gave an iron bed minus the spring; another housewife had a mattress she was about to discard; old Mrs. Atwood down by the bridge

donated a feather bed to be steamed and then made into pillows. From another quarter came another cot and from yet another a single bed, a crib and a cradle. Still another housewife, who was re-furnishing her drawing-room, bestowed on them a tall, old-fashioned mirror, cracked by the careless flourish of an umbrella with which her son was illustrating a golf stroke.

"Luckily the break is at one end," she said to Helen, "and the glass is so large that you can have it cut into two or possibly three small looking-glasses for the bedrooms."

Helen was both grateful and dismayed, for she had forgotten that looking glasses were necessary — another article that could not be manufactured by home industry. A week before the Fête, however, she had had promised all the bedsteads she needed — though some lacked springs, some mattresses, and almost all were without pillows — four cribs, half a dozen chairs and two high chairs, and a collection of odd pieces. She refused nothing but double beds; there was not space enough for those in a bedroom with three people in it; it would seem to the women too much like the crowded tenements they came from, she thought. Miss Merriam objected also, on the ground that it was not well for babies to sleep with grown people.

"What do you think of this plan?" Ethel Brown asked her mother after the girls had made a careful list of their gifts. "We did think that if we didn't have a stick in the house the people would be interested in helping us because of our poverty. We've found out that they are awfully interested even with-

out seeing the house. Do you think it would be a good scheme to put into the rooms the things we have ready and to fasten on the door a notice saying

'THIS ROOM NEEDS'

and under that a list of what is lacking? Don't you think some of them would say, 'I've got an extra cushion at home that would do for a pillow here; I'll send it over'; or 'Don't you remember that three legged chair that used to be in Joe's room? I believe these children can mend it and paint it to look well enough for this room'?"

"Ethel Brown, you're running Ethel Blue hard in the line of ideas!" cried Roger admiringly from a position at the door which he had taken as he passed through the hall and heard discussion going on.

"It's a capital idea," agreed Mrs. Morton. "You'd better ask Grandfather again for a wagon and go around and collect the things that have been promised. You don't want to bother people to send them over themselves."

"If they have a cart come to the door to pick them up they may throw in a few extras," remarked Roger. "The painting and color washing are all done, I wish to report, Madam President," he continued, turning to Helen, "so the furniture, such as it is, can be put in at any time."

"Almost all of it will need a thorough overhauling first, if the specimens I've seen prove anything," replied Helen. "Every one of the beds needs painting and some need strengthening in various ways and places."

"Perhaps I'd better go round with the man Grandfather sends, and then we can unload in the

yard behind Rose House and do our washing and painting and repairing and upholstering there so that all the things will look fresh and be clean when they are taken inside."

Every one worked with vigor during the last few days before the fesival, for the renovating of old furniture takes more time than any one ever expects it to. The results were so satisfactory, however, that neither the boys nor the girls gave a thought to their tired hands and backs when evening brought them release from their labors.

The great day was clear, and, for the last of June, cool. Every plan worked out well and every helper appeared at the moment he was wanted. The box seats and tables, superintended by Ethel Brown and served by half a dozen friends all wearing white dresses and pink aprons, bloomed rosily on the veranda. Under the large rose Della and Ethel Blue, dressed in pink, sold fancy articles. Dorothy, sitting " under the rose " in the rose jungle, and dressed like a moss rose, with a filmy green tunic draping her pink frock, described brilliant futures to laughing inquirers. Margaret, dressed to represent the yellow Scottish roses, sold flowers from the Ethels' garden and took orders for rose bushes.

The boys were everywhere, opening ice cream tubs for Moya in the background, guiding would-be players to the tennis court and the croquet ground, and directing new arrivals where to tie their horses and park their motors. Every member of the club was provided with a small notebook wherein to jot down any bit of advice that was offered and seemed profitable or to record any offer of fittings that might be made.

Helen took no regular duty, leaving herself free to go over the house with any one who wanted to know the Club's plans, and she had more frequent need than any of the others to use her book. Ethel Brown's scheme had been followed. On the door of each room was posted a list of articles needed to complete the furnishing of that room.

"They certainly aren't greedy!" exclaimed one matron after reading the notice. "This says that this room is complete except for bed clothing."

She waved her hand around with some scorn. Helen dimpled with amusement.

"We thought we'd make one room as nearly complete as we could," she explained. "You see this has a bed, two cribs, a looking-glass, and shelves as substitutes for a washstand and a closet and a table and a bureau.

"There are no chairs, child!"

"These two boxes are the chairs. We had a few chairs given us but they'll be needed down stairs. We think they'll have more exercise than any chairs ever had before. They'll be used in the dining-room for breakfast, and then they'll be moved to the veranda to spend the morning, and in they'll come again for dinner and out they'll go for the afternoon, and in for supper, and after supper they'll be moved into the hall which is to serve as the sitting room!"

Helen's hearer pressed her hand to her head.

"You make me positively dizzy!" she exclaimed. "At any rate I'd like to make this room complete according to your notions, so I'll send you some sheets and pillow cases and blankets and a spread if you'll allow me."

"We'll be glad to have them," accepted Helen, beaming. "Roger will call for them if that will be more convenient for you," and she made a note of the gift and the time when it should be sent after.

Other women remembered as they examined the door lists that they had a mattress that could be spared, or a pillow or two or a pair of summer blankets.

"What are you going to do for ornaments," asked another.

Helen laughed.

"James Hancock has an idea for decorating the walls so that they'll interest the babies, and we're going to have fresh cheese-cloth curtains at all the windows, but that's the end of our possibilities."

"I have several bureau scarves that are in good condition but they have been washed so many times that they're a little faded. If you'd like those —?" she ended with an upward inflection.

"We would," replied Helen promptly.

"Could you use some prints of pictures — good paintings?" inquired yet another, a person whose taste Helen knew could be trusted.

"We'd be glad of them. We can frame them in passepartout. We'd be especially glad of madonnas."

"That's just what I was going to offer you. A club I once belonged to studied celebrated paintings of madonnas one winter and I made this collection. Many of them are only penny prints and some are cut from magazines —"

"They're perfectly good for us," Helen reassured her, and made another note in her book.

It was just after the sun went down that the girls

gave their rose dance on the little lawn. Their dresses were all pink or white with pink ribbons, and as they moved in the twilight and waved in graceful curves long rose stems each with its heavy pink blossom or its shower of small blooms, they called forth exclamations of delight from the onlookers.

"Good work!" "Charmingly done!" "Fine!" were the cries that reached their ears as, flushed with the exercise and the knowledge of their success they flitted into the house.

Most of the visitors went home with the falling dark, but some stayed to see the rose lanterns lighted, and others, who had not been able to come in the afternoon, drove or walked out from town in the evening and were served with ice cream and strawberries from a supply that had been wonderfully well calculated.

"The Club won't have any left-over cake to eat up," Ethel Brown whispered to Ethel Blue as she passed her on the porch. "There's only enough left for four more servings, and the cookies are almost out."

Ethel Blue silently danced a few steps to show her pleasure and went to the kitchen to find out how Moya was getting on. Sheila was fast asleep on Moya's jacket in a corner.

"Tired?" asked Ethel.

"It's weary to the bone I am wid the stooping, Miss Ethel Blue," confessed Moya. "But I believe ye've made your fortunes and the house will be furnished iligant."

Ethel was not quite so sanguine, but after the promised gifts were gathered on the next day she began to be hopeful that the money they had made

would be enough to provide the most necessary matters still unprovided.

"Let us have just a week to spend this money and to make up the sheets and pillow cases and curtains and you can tell Mr. Watkins to send out the women," Helen announced triumphantly to Della.

"I'm going to spend the week with Margaret so I can come over with her every day and help," returned smiling Della.

"Then we shan't need a whole week. When you go home to-night please ask your father to be making his selection — four mothers with two children apiece. You and Tom can escort them out on the Tuesday after Fourth of July.

CHAPTER VI

POSTPONEMENT

NO one but Ethel Blue knew that Miss Merriam and Dr. Edward Watkins were engaged. It had come about only after a long misunderstanding which Ethel Blue succeeded in clearing away, and it had happened so recently that no one had been told when he walked up on Dorothy's veranda one afternoon about the middle of July. Cries of surprise and shouts of pleasure greeted him. Only Miss Merriam was silent, but her eyes beamed and she gave him a cordial handshake that did him good.

"When did you get back?"

"Didn't you like Oklahoma?"

"Are you going to stay East?"

These and a dozen other questions were thrown at him so fast that he had no chance to answer them. He made gestures of despair.

"I got back late last night. I do like Oklahoma; I expect to like it even better," and he shot a humorous glance at Miss Merriam. "I'm not going to stay East."

"Why did you come back so soon? You hardly got there before you came back."

"Children, children!" remonstrated Mrs. Smith. "Don't ask Dr. Watkins about his personal affairs in this fashion. Don't answer them," she urged him. "They ought to know better!" and she shook

her head at Roger and the girls, who were surrounding the young man whom they looked on as a great friend although he was much older than any one of them.

"I don't mind a bit, Mrs. Smith," returned the doctor. "I had hardly reached Stillman and been looked over by the physician I went out to work with — that is, I'd been there six weeks — when he had a patient come to him who needed an immediate operation of a kind that can only be done in New York where they have special equipment for it. He's a rich oil man so he didn't mind the expense of coming on himself or of bringing a doctor with him to keep his nerves quiet on the way. Dr. Billings, my chief, couldn't very well leave some serious cases in Stillman, and I happened to know pretty well the specialists here, so I put my pajamas back into my bag and picked up my patient and here I am."

"Where is he?" inquired Mrs. Smith.

"At the hotel now. I went to the hospital early this morning and arranged for the operation, and I'm to take him there late this afternoon. Between whiles I came out here to see how my U. S. C. friends were progressing."

His eyes lingered on Miss Merriam as she sat in a low chair and knitted swiftly, Elisabeth at her feet, squeaking a chatty rubber doll uninterruptedly.

"We're O.K.," answered Roger.

"We've put through Roger's plan for the Fresh Air mothers and babies," said Ethel Brown.

"Have you got time to go over and see Rose House — the farm house?" inquired Dorothy.

Only Ethel Blue kept silence, for she guessed that he had not come out to see his friends of the U. S. C.

so much as one of their friends. She noticed that he glanced at Miss Merriam.

"I'd like to see it very much," he replied. "Do you suppose we could walk over there now?"

"Certainly we can," answered Dorothy, rising promptly.

"Dorothy, I shall want you to do something for me in a few minutes," said Mrs. Smith. "Dr. Watkins will excuse you."

She nodded, smiling, at Edward. Miss Merriam blushed even more vividly than before.

"Too bad, Dodo, but I'll tell the doctor all you know and more too," consoled Roger.

"Your mother said she was coming here for you to go with her to the Atwoods', Roger," his aunt reminded him.

"So she did. The girls can tell you all we've done, and before you get back Tom or I can show you our special part," Roger said encouragingly.

"I'm sorry, but I've got to finish something I began this morning," said Ethel Blue in a faint voice; running into the house to avoid further questioning.

"Nobody left but me?" said Ethel Brown cheerfully. "Too bad, but Miss Merriam will go, won't you, Miss Gertrude? And between us we can tell you all there is to know."

Edward looked first at Miss Merriam whose eyes were on her knitting and then beseechingly at Mrs. Smith.

"I rather think your mother would like to have you go with her and Roger to the Atwoods'." Mrs. Smith said in response to the glance. "Miss Merriam will have to do her best to entertain the doctor with an account of your doings, but she has had

such a generous hand in them herself that I don't believe she'll omit much that is important."

"Will you go?" Dr. Watkins asked Gertrude softly, leaning toward her chair.

"I'll go," she replied, thrusting her needles into her ball of yarn.

"Elisabeth will be good here until you get back," said Mrs. Smith, trying to speak as if she were not alive with interest to know whether what she guessed about the two young people was true or not. "Take your hat, my dear," she added as Gertrude vanished into the house.

When she came out she was wearing a wide hat with a pink lining that cast a rosy glow on her cheeks.

"That's a fascinating hat," murmured Edward as they walked down the path to the gate, "but I don't like it because I can't see your eyes."

"That's why I wore it," confessed Gertrude.

"After we've passed the Clarks' can't you take it off?"

"Perhaps," was the unsatisfactory answer.

"You received my telegram, saying I'd start East on the tenth, didn't you? You were the only one on Mrs. Smith's veranda who wasn't surprised at seeing me."

"Ethel Blue knew."

"Dear little Ethel Blue! She helped me out of a hard place when you wouldn't speak to me. I never should have known what you were angry about if she hadn't told me."

"After a long time she told me what she had told you. So I showed her your May basket note and told her I had telegraphed to you that I — I didn't object to Oklahoma, and I showed her your reply."

"That was on the Fourth of July. It has seemed a thousand years since then."

"To me, too."

"Really?"

"Really."

Edward tried to see the blue eyes that he hoped were glowing with earnestness and love, but the pretty hat was in the way.

"Do take it off," he begged, peering under the brim. "Your sunshade is protection enough from the sun and from the observation of Miss Clark, too."

Gertrude obediently drew out the pins and gave the hat into his hand.

"You're the very prettiest girl I ever saw in my life!" Edward exclaimed. "It's worth travelling two or three times from Oklahoma to have the privilege of setting my eyes on you!"

Gertrude laughed happily but shyly.

"Now I want to know when you'll marry me?" he asked.

"Marry you?" repeated Gertrude. "Why, you aren't settled yet. You can't talk about that yet!"

Her sunny face grew suddenly overcast, and she drew away from him slightly as they walked.

"I'm settled quite enough to talk about it. This is the way it is. Dr. Billings didn't offer me any definite terms until he saw what kind of fellow I was. That was quite right, you know; I might have been a perfect chump."

Gertrude gave him a glance that meant that he who would think such a thing, even if he never had seen Edward, was one of the same stamp.

"As it happened he liked me."

"Of course he did."

"He had two or three rather difficult cases soon after I got there and I happened to give him some ideas about new treatment for them — ideas I'd just picked up in New York — so he thinks I'll be valuable to him."

"I should say you would be!"

"He has offered me a salary —" and he named an amount that he would not have attained in New York in three or four years —" and when our combined practice goes over a certain sum I'm to share evenly with him."

"A just man."

"Generous, too. But the point is that the salary he promises me is large enough to warrant us in marrying right off, so if you can get ready in a few days we can be married before I go back."

"Edward!"

Gertrude gasped. She sounded as if she were taken utterly by surprise, but there was also a note of sadness in her voice that the doctor could not diagnose.

"Aren't you glad?" he inquired.

"Glad? O, yes," panted the girl, "but I can't, I can't."

"You can't? Why not? You don't need to get a lot of clothes. You can send for them later. Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Morton would be delighted to shop for you."

"I know they would."

"As for Elisabeth," went on Edward quickly, forestalling another objection, "they can find some one to look after her in just the same way they found you — at the School of Mothercraft. She wouldn't

be so superior a caretaker, of course — there's no one like my lady love — but she'd 'do'."

"There are plenty who would do that as well as I," contradicted the young woman, "but — but I just can't; not now, Edward."

It was the first time she ever had called him by his name and he was so delighted at hearing it from her lips that he almost forgot in what connection she had said it. But not for long.

"Why can't you, dear? Tell me. I have a right to know," and he gave her sleeve an impatient little tug.

"I suppose you have; but I wish you'd accept my judgment and not ask me. I can't."

"Tell me and let me decide."

"I can't let you decide if you decide against what I know is right."

"Tell me, anyway."

"Perhaps I've told you that I have no living relatives, either near or far. I am the last of my family."

"Poor little orphan!"

"When my father died he left but a very small fortune. It was unwisely invested, and when my mother died a few years later there was almost nothing left of it."

"What in the world did you do?"

"I had good friends — friends of my parents — and I borrowed enough money to put me through college and through the School of Mothercraft. You may think that I ought to have found some work when I was much younger, but the old gentleman I consulted agreed with me that I ought to do credit to my people and that I could do that and

earn my living without becoming a drudge if I didn't enter some blind alley employment such as I should have had to do if I started when I was merely a young girl."

"I should think so — poor lamb."

"So I've spent all these years and all this money educating myself, and you must see clearly that I can't marry you until I return the money. It wouldn't be fair."

"Would the old gentleman object?"

"I think he'd be glad to have me do what would make me happiest."

"Wouldn't you be happiest if you married me? Do marry me, and we'll save up and pay him back in a jiffy."

"O, no, don't you see I couldn't do that? I couldn't accept my education at your hands. I must go to you free of debt. I must."

She twisted her hands nervously and Edward looking down at her, saw that this was not a passing emotion with her but a deep seated belief. He asked gently, "Would you object to my having a talk with this old gentleman?"

"Not in the least — only, Edward dear, it wouldn't make a bit of difference what he said; I *can't* marry you until I have paid my debt to him."

"I won't pretend that I don't see your point and sympathize with you, too, my darling," he replied, softly. "You're a plucky, right-minded girl and I honor you for your stand; but just the same I wish you'd marry me right off," and he gave a humorous groan.

"Waiting is the hardest kind of work," sighed Gertrude; "but perhaps we'll start out all the better

for waiting. You'll have time to save up your salary, and perhaps you can build a little house in Stillman."

"Build a house!" repeated the doctor with a groan that was not humorous this time. "Do you mean to tell me that you're not going to marry me for so long that I'll have time to save money enough for a house? That's — that's pretty awful, Gertrude!"

She looked at him and was so near weeping that he could not rage against her verdict as he had felt like doing but a moment before.

"I'll have to accept your decision, of course," he replied sadly; "but you'll write to me often, won't you?"

"Of course I will, and I'll tell you just how I get on with my savings and you must tell me just how you're getting on with yours."

"Can you make any calculation of the time it will be before you marry me at your present rate of earning?"

Gertrude's face fell.

"Edward, it's so awful I don't dare think of it! But I have some plans that I am going to try to work out for making more, and — we must hope and hope that everything will turn out well for us."

"Where is this wretched house we've come out to see?" inquired the doctor, looking about him suddenly as he realized that they had walked nearly to the Emersons'.

"Here at the left. Don't you remember the old Emerson homestead? The children have started a Fresh Air home there, and they have a dozen women and babies established in the old place."

"Aren't they winners, those kids! Their per-

sistency deserves to win! I suppose we've got to go in or we'll be drowned with questions we can't answer when we go back."

They walked gravely up the lane that led to the house.

"Isn't the veranda new? I don't remember seeing it before."

"That and one partition to make a new room are the only changes they made, but they cleaned and painted and 'did over' the whole house, and they're still furnishing it. You can see what they have for chairs and tables on the porch — boxes."

"Simple but entirely convenient," approved Edward. "Can we go in?"

"Mrs. Schuler is the Matron. She'll be glad to see you."

She was and she showed her guests over the renovated building from one end to the other and relieved Miss Merriam of the explanations that would have been a great strain on her, excited as she was. Edward's interest was somewhat forced, but genuine, none the less.

"The furnishing is reduced to lowest terms," Mrs. Schuler explained, "out of necessity. This large dining room table and the small one, the carpenters made out of planks, but the girls made a cotton flannel pad to go over them and covers of unbleached cotton sheeting stencilled along the edge with a pattern in blue, and they're really pretty."

The doctor agreed.

"Where did they get their table linen?"

"The 'linen' is cotton, but Moya keeps it beautifully washed with the help of the women, so it always looks spotless. The china is blue and white —

the very cheapest to be had, but it is pretty nevertheless. The curtains, you see, are only cheesecloth, but they are stencilled with the same blue pattern that is on the table cover, and they hang in soft folds, and I don't think you'd ask for anything more suitable."

"I certainly should not."

"This is Moya's department back here," and Mrs. Schuler opened the door into the kitchen where Moya, brisk and contented, sat among her shining tins, peeling potatoes and casting an occasional glance out of the low window to Sheila, playing happily in a sand heap with two or three other children. Moya rose as the party came in and pointed out the beauties of her kitchen with due pride. The young ladies had given her curtains just like those in the dining room, she said, and her cooking utensils were white and blue and the earthenware dishes which could be cooked in and served on the table afterwards were blue outside and white inside. The linoleum was blue and white and a strip of plaster above the old-fashioned wainscot was washed with a light blue.

A draining board sloped toward one side of the sink, a table stood at the other. Above the table were open shelves laden with two quart preserve jars, filled with rice, hominy, tapioca, dried beans and peas and such cereals as were in every day use. The contents could be seen easily and the red-bordered labels gave a touch of gay color. The lowest of the shelves held utensils and from its edge dangled spoons, sharp knives and saucepans, so that a cook might do a large part of her work without moving from the spot.

"We're very short of chairs at Rose House," laughed Mrs. Schuler, "but Moya has a comfortable one here so that she may sit down and rest her tired feet whenever she has a chance."

Against the wall in other parts of the room were hinged shelves which could be raised to serve as tables or let down flat to be out of the way.

"When the women come here to help me wid the vegetables they sit before them," explained Moya, "and whin they go away, down they go again."

"They bring their chairs with them, I suppose," observed Dr. Watkins, noticing that there was but one in the room.

"They do," laughed the cook. "You remarked that there's no chairs in the dining room. 'Tis because they's out on the porch. When supper time comes the furniture of the porch is brought into the house."

"What do you do for high chairs for the children?"

"Ivery day almost Mr. Roger or Mr. James or Mr. Tom makes a chair. You'll see the iligant ones when you go out on the porch. 'Tis surprising how a pile of boxes can be made into a chair!"

From the kitchen they passed into the hall, used now as a sitting room, and with the Matron they smiled at the scarcity of furniture. There were no chairs, for they were all out of doors, but Mrs. Hancock's two sofas, strengthened and re-covered with gay cretonne, made lively bits of color. Shelves against the wall served as tables and desks and were strewn with picture books and magazines and bits of sewing. As the hall was lighted only from the doors at each end, not only was the woodwork white but

the wash above the panelling was yellow to brighten the dusky interior. A litter of children's toys on the floor gave a lived-in look to the long room in spite of its scanty furnishing.

Mrs. Schuler's " office " was decorated in pink — the walls, the pattern stencilled on the cheesecloth curtains, and the cushions of the chairs that stood cosily face to face before the shelf-desk, on which lay a pink blotter.

" These chairs came out of Mrs. Emerson's attic," explained Mrs. Schuler. " The boys stiffened their legs and painted them white, and the girls made cushions out of excelsior and covered them with pink denim. By next week there will be some pictures in every room. The next meeting of the Club is to be a framing bee."

The upstairs bedrooms were practically all alike in what was in them but they differed in coloring. The old bedsteads had been freshened with white enamel paint; the washstand-shelves were covered with white marblecloth and draped with hangings of unbleached cotton sheeting, as was the dressing-table-shelf and the high closet-shelf, and a curtain of the sheeting hung across the shelves that served as a bureau. Boxes turned on end or upside down made seats, and, as they were padded with an old " comfortable " which Mrs. Morton had allowed the girls to cut up, they apparently were not *un*comfortable. A full skirt of the sheeting and a top of the same useful material made them not ugly to look upon.

" We've been perfectly impartial," Mrs. Schuler said. " No one has a single piece of furniture that some one else has not."

" Isn't there danger of the women getting lost

through not being able to tell one room from another?" inquired the doctor gravely.

"You haven't noticed James's precaution against that," returned Mrs. Schuler. "Do you see, he has made this a rooster room. He hunted up a lot of old poultry magazines and children's picture books and cut out the gorgeous cockerels whose portraits were shown in them. He pasted one on the headboard and one on the footboard of the bed, stuck others on the various shelf curtains and enough to make a border at the top of the wall. Della stencilled small ones on the cheesecloth window curtains. The mothers like them, and the children who are large enough to notice, go into fits of joy over them."

"They do look gay against the gray wall."

"The next room is blue, as you see, and here he put blue-gray dogs and puppies everywhere. See them scampering along to make a frieze? That's enough to make any child gurgle with delight."

"What are the rest?"

"The yellow room has kittens of all shades and markings, and the violet walls are covered with Jersey cows. The background is very becoming to their tan coats."

"You'll howl over Moya's room," said Gertrude, breaking her silence lest it be noticed by Mrs. Schuler. "She had her choice of animals and colorings and what do you think she selected?"

"I can't imagine."

"Pigs! Pigs! So she has a frieze of tiny Irish porkers all pinky-white, against a background just a trifle pinkier than they are. They're droll!"

"It makes her think of home, I suppose."

"She says so. And Sheila evidently inherits her mother's fondness for the national family friend, for she points to them and has names for those she can see from her crib."

On the veranda as they left the house sat most of the women, sewing or talking together or playing with their babies. They looked curiously after Dr. Watkins and Miss Merriam as they went away down the lane.

"They make a fine couple," was their comment.

In their inmost hearts Edward and Gertrude thought so too.

CHAPTER VII

FURNITURE MAKING

IT did not take the women long to adjust themselves to life at Rose House, and as for the children, they loved it from the first. It was a great international gathering that was sheltered on the old farm. Mrs. Schuler was German; Moya, Irish. Mrs. Peterson, a Swede, occupied the rooster room with her baby and her flaxen-haired daughter of three; Mrs. Paterno, an Italian, found good pasturage among the cows of the violet room for her black-eyed boys of two and four; Mrs. Tsanoff, a Bulgarian, told the Matron that her twin girl babies were too young to pay attention to the kittens on the curtains of the yellow room; while Mrs. Vereshchagin, a Russian, discovered that the puppies of the blue room were a great help to her in holding the attention of her boys of three and five when she was putting them to bed.

Mrs. Schuler shook her head doubtfully when she took down their names and nationalities in her notebook on the day of their arrival.

"If we get through the summer without quarrels over the war it will be a miracle!" she exclaimed to her husband.

But she found that the poor creatures were too weary, too sad, too physically crushed to have spirit enough left to fight any battles, even those of words. With almost every one of them there had been a

tragedy such as often comes to the immigrants who reach the United States equipped for success only with strong muscles—a tragedy of wasted hope and broken courage and failing vigor if not of death. Mrs. Paterno was the only one of them who could sympathize with Moya's widowhood; her husband had seen the Black Hand death sign a few months before, had disregarded it and had been stabbed in the back one night as he came home from his work. His wife was now a stooping, terror-stricken woman, looking fearfully over her shoulder at every unusual sound, and snatching up her children and rushing to her room with them once or twice a day whenever she saw a stranger turning into the lane that led to the house.

Mrs. Tsanoff was a recent arrival in America, having come across with her husband after the second Balkan war, with the cries of her dying father and brother ringing in her ears and no knowledge of the hardships waiting here for an unskilled laborer who knew not a word of English. There had been work at first at a wage that seemed ample to them when it was offered and proved to be ridiculously small when they learned the cost of living in New York. When the first "job" ended, her "man" had walked the streets in a vain hunt for work for which he was not so well fitted physically now as he had been when he first landed, although now he knew enough of the language to understand what the "Boss" said to him.

"They use him up; they throw him away," she had complained pathetically to Mr. Watkins when he found her at his chapel office one day, almost starving. He had found work for her "man"

and had impressed on the wife that she must do her best to get well at Rose House so that they might spend the next winter together and not be separated.

Mrs. Peterson's husband had been a janitor in an apartment house until an attack of pneumonia lost him his "job" which his wife did not speak enough English to carry for him until his recovery. There had followed a long struggle to pay the doctor, the rent, the grocer, out of savings that were sufficient for, perhaps, a week of "rainy days"—certainly not for a whole "rainy" season. At last Mr. Watkins had found work for Mr. Peterson at a "camp" in the Adirondacks, where he could have light work and the benefit of the high altitude during the summer, while his wife and the children at Rosemont recovered from the result of their months of privation.

Mrs. Vereshchagin's husband had the wonderful knowledge of languages that is common to his countrymen, and had acted as interpreter in one of the courts of the lower east side. Sometimes he was sent up-town to interpret. It was when he was on his way north in a Fourth Avenue car one day that he saw a crowd in Union Square and jumped off to find out what was going on. It proved to be a gathering of malcontents, carrying inflammatory banners and listening with satisfaction to orators who did their best to arouse hatred against all people whom they thought better off than themselves, and against all government. With other onlookers, Vereshchagin listened from the outskirts but a stir of the throng pushed him toward the centre just as the policemen, tired of hearing themselves called "Irish vipers," broke their way through, clubbing any head

that was in their way. The Russian's was one. When he came to his senses in the hospital he found himself under arrest "for resisting an officer." When he was able to go into court he was tried, convicted in spite of his protestations, and sent to Blackwell's Island for three months. His wife was overcome by the disgrace and the injustice and fell ill. A visiting nurse reported her case to Mr. Watkins, with the result that, as soon as she was able, she was brought to Rose House to convalesce and await her husband's release. Whether he would be re-instated in his court position or whether his conviction would bar him from the only work for which he was fitted was yet to be seen.

Conversation was not carried on fluently among them. They met on the common ground of English, but not one of them could speak it well, each one translated phrases of her own tongue quite literally, and the meaning of the whole talk was largely a matter of guesswork. What they did understand was nature's language of motherhood. They were content to sit for hours on the veranda or in the grove or behind the house, preparing vegetables for Moya, chattering about their babies and explaining their meaning by gestures that seemed to be perfectly understood.

The women had daily duties to perform according to a schedule worked out by Mrs. Schuler, who apportioned to each a share of the general work of the house in addition to the care of her own room and the washing for herself and her children. With so many fingers flying the tasks were soon done, and then they sat on the porch or in the grove among the sweet-smelling pines, or walked in the pasture

or up and down the lane leading to the main road. Once in a while they went to Rosemont, but for the most part they were too languid to care to walk far and too glad of the change and the rest and quiet to want to weary themselves unnecessarily.

"They may need more amusement when the novelty wears off and when they feel stronger," said Mrs. Schuler to Ethel Brown who inquired as to their contentment, "but for the present they seem quite happy."

To the Swedish woman, who had come from Stockholm, and the Russian whose home had been in Petrograd, the country was something quite new, and they never tired of asking questions about the animals and the various farming processes which they saw going on on Mr. Emerson's place adjoining.

One day Mr. Schuler, smoking a peaceful pipe in his wheeled chair beside the house, heard wild shrieks of women in distress. He called to his wife, to Moya, to each of the inmates by name. There was no response, but the howls of fear continued unabated. With great difficulty he wheeled his chair to the porch where his crutches had been laid and hobbled around the corner toward the back whence the screams seemed to come.

Toward the house on the run came Mrs. Peterson and Mrs. Vereshchagin, showing no signs of lassitude as they sprinted for the protection of the dwelling, followed by a cow who was travelling at a swinging trot. Behind the cow came Mrs. Paterno and Mrs. Tsanoff, making Italian and Bulgarian sounds intended to coax the animal to stop.

Instead of stopping, Madam Cow did not even

hesitate. On, on she came, apparently not angry or even frightened, but in dead earnest about seeking some spot where she need not be annoyed by intruders. The fences on each side of the lane kept her in the narrow path at least until she should reach the open space behind the house, and they served the same unfriendly purpose for the women in advance. It did not seem to occur to the pursued to flatten themselves against the fence and let the cow pass, or, if they did think of it, they did not feel any confidence that she would go on by them.

Mr. Schuler, balancing himself uncertainly on his crutches, signed to them to press to one side, but they were too frightened to pay any attention to him and dashed on. They brushed against him, one on the right and one on the left, on their way through the back yard, almost knocking him from his feet. The cow, reaching the yard, stopped with entire amiability, and stood gazing tranquilly at the flying skirts of her retreating foes, gently swinging the tassel of her tail as she meditated on the strangeness of their behavior—for had it not been she herself who was pursued? Even as she thought it her pursuers entered the yard and she swung around to make sure that their intentions were peaceful.

Panting and laughing Mrs. Paterno and Mrs. Tsanoff stammered out their explanation to Mr. Schuler. They had been country girls, they said, and the sight of the cow in the pasture aroused old memories. Approaching her they tried to milk her, one on one side and the other on the other. Whether their hands had lost their cunning, or whether the cow resented the attentions of two milkmaids at a time or whether the directions they gave

her and the soothing remarks they offered in Italian and Bulgarian sounded threatening to her American ears, who can tell? The result was that she walked briskly away from them, sufficiently annoyed to want to put some distance between them and her. In leaving them she approached the other two women who were terrified at her coming and fled before her down the lane uttering the screams that had roused Mr. Schuler from his peaceful pipe.

The pursuing women went into the house to comfort the pursued, and Mr. Schuler returned to his shady corner just as Roger and James and the Ethels arrived to do their daily task of furniture making and upholstery. When they heard the tale of the international complication with the cow they all went to the back yard to soothe the feelings of the disturbed bovine, but when she saw them coming she moved away, evidently taking no chances of further interruption of her repose.

The boys had built a platform across the back of the house, and it was here that they did their carpentry, an awning sheltering them from the sun or rain. A cupboard at one end held their tools, and their partly finished articles were neatly stacked in a corner. As they got out their tools now James made a confession.

"To tell you the honest, unvarnished truth, I'm tired of making chairs. It seems as if we'd never have enough."

"It takes an awful lot to furnish a house," commented Roger wisely, "and you know we had very few given us so if we want enough we have to make them."

"Don't I know it! And haven't I been up in our

attic a dozen times to see if I'd overlooked some old stager that I could mend up and bring here."

"Me, too," confessed Roger. "Poor luck, though. I'm spoiling to make something different; I want to try a window seat that I saw in a magazine the other day—it had stands at each end for flowers with shelves underneath for books. It looked like a dandy and not very hard."

"Seats for the ladies first," said James firmly. "I really believe that four more chairs for grown-ups and three more high chairs are going to be enough, so let's get busy."

"We've got all the chairs you've done upholstered all they're going to be," said Ethel Brown. "Why can't Ethel Blue and I each make a high chair?"

"No reason at all," agreed Roger quickly. "You've watched James and me and seen our really superior workmanship; imitate it, my child!"

The girls were already turning over the boys' supply of boxes to select those suitable for the chairs for the children. They took four that had held lemons or other fruit and were tall and narrow when stood on end. The boards they were made of were very light but quite solid enough to hold the weight of a small child. To make it firm upon the ground, however, they sawed a piece of heavy plank a little larger than the end upon which the box was to stand and nailed it on from the inside.

"This one seems more wobbly than the others the boys made," admitted Ethel Brown.

"You've taken a box that we discarded," confessed James. "You'd better nail a heavy block of wood on the inside It won't show when you

put the cover on and it will prevent its being top-heavy."

The Highchair that the Ethels Made.

This piece of advice they followed and made the lower part of the chair quite unshakable.

"Now for the top," announced Ethel Brown. "Will this other lemon box make three tops, Roger?"

"Cut it into three parts. That gives you the back and arms for all the three that you're going to make."

"They'll have to be reinforced where they join."

"Certainly they will. Did you make quite sure that your lower box is strong at all its corners!"

They had not but they went over it carefully now and nailed on a cleat or two where the joinings seemed insecure. The new top part they protected by strips across the rough sawed edges and down the fronts. The latter they made long enough to lap over the bottom box down to the ground so that they could be used as a means of screwing the upper and lower parts together.

Additional screws united the two parts firmly and the high chair was done. The boys complimented their co-workers on the success of their first experiment.

"I hardly could have done it better myself," said Roger grandly. "I do wish, though," he added, "we could have found boxes of this shape that were made of a little heavier stock. They'd be firmer."

"We could have knocked some of those big boxes apart and built the whole thing, I suppose," said Ethel Blue, "but it would have taken a great deal longer."

"It would have meant a lot more measuring and sawing and nailing. These will last out this summer, anyway, unless some of these children grow into baby Jumbos and break them down."

"I think they're strong enough. Why, I'd trust even fat little Ayleesabet in this," and Ethel Brown gave her new production a vigorous shake.

All the high chairs were covered with blue and

white cretonne to match the blue and white of the dining room and the girls set to work to tack on the outside covering and to cut out the covers of the small cushions that were to make the seat and back comfortable. The cushions themselves they had made from ticking filled with excelsior when they had calculated the number of high chairs they must have.

The boys, meanwhile were constructing two chairs of quite different build. One was a heavy chair for the hall or the veranda, its original condition being a packing box a foot and a half deep, about twenty inches wide and three or four feet long. This also was set on end, and the other end and the cover were laid aside to be used in making the seat and in shutting in the openings below the seat.

"How are you going to fasten that seat so it won't let the sitter down on the floor?" inquired Ethel Blue, as James explained what he was going to do.

"Do you see these cleats, ma'am? These are each a foot long. I nail one of these standing up straight at each edge of the sides and the back—six of them altogether. Then I lay three other cleats across their tops—thusly."

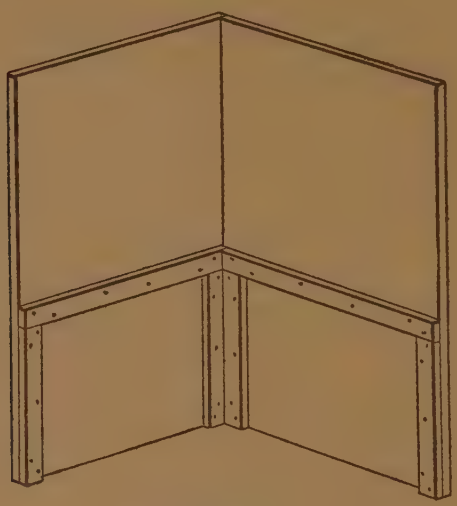
"O, you've made a sort of framework that will support the seat! I get that!" exclaimed Ethel Blue.

"All you have to do now is to nail your seat boards on to those horizontal cleats and it's as firm as firm can be."

"If you're going to use that for a porch chair you needn't cover over that hole underneath the seat; just put a cretonne pleated curtain over it—the same stuff as your upholstery, you know—and then the

porch magazines and books and even sewing or knitting could be left in it."

"That's not such a bad idea," agreed James, his head on one side. "I believe I'll do that. You see, I nailed these cleats a little way back from the edge so that when I put on the boards to cover this gaping



Cleats to Support the Seat.

hole the thickness of the boards wouldn't stick out beyond the front edge of the chair."

"That won't interfere with this new idea."

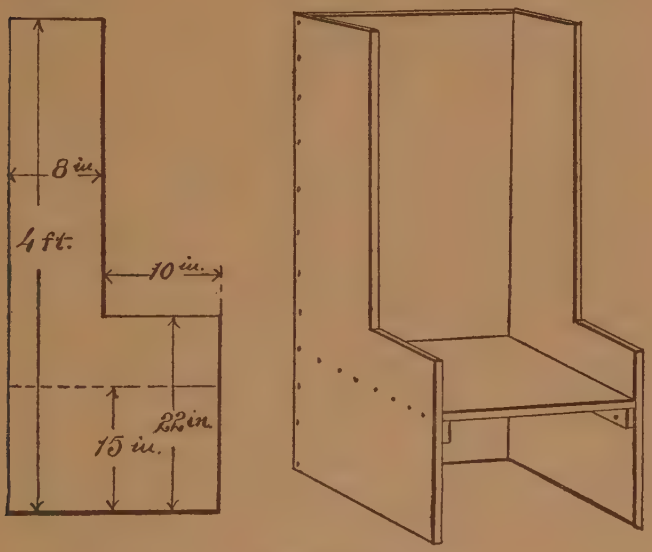
"Not a bit. And if the chair is to be brought into the house for winter use the boards can be put on. I'll fix it that way if you've got enough chintz to make the front piece."

"We were going to pleat it across the front anyway, so it won't take a bit extra."

"Aren't you going to do something with those

sides—those arms, or whatever you call them?" inquired Ethel Brown. "They seem sharp and uncomfortable and in the way to me."

Both boys studied the chair seriously before answering. Then they took a pencil and paper and consulted.



James's Chair.

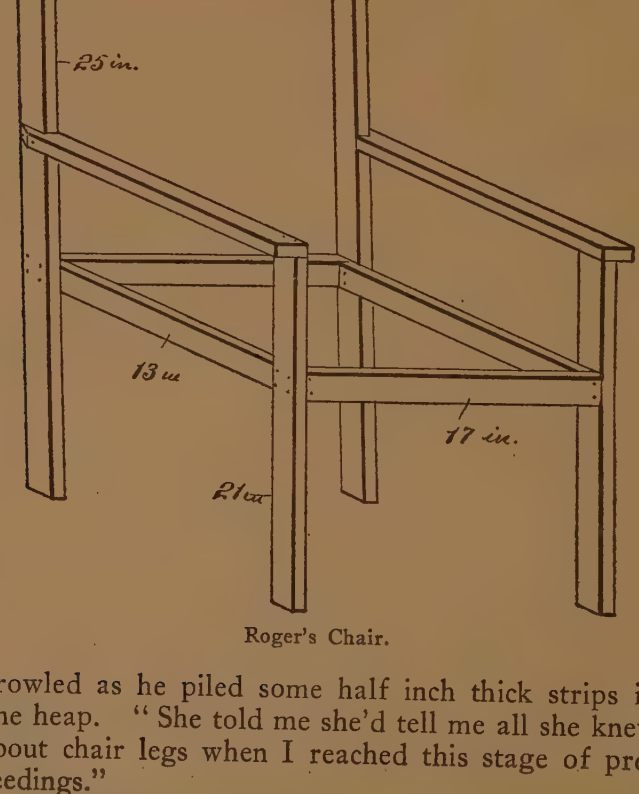
"I should think it would look pretty well to cut out a right angle on each side," suggested James. "That would leave a sort of wing effect like a hall porter's chair, only not so high, and at the same time it would make an arm to rest your elbow on. How does that strike you?"

Roger nodded. "It hits me all right. I was thinking of a curve instead of a right angle, but the right angle will be easier to make. Go ahead."

So the right angle was decided on and James proceeded to cut it.

Roger, meanwhile, had been sorting out the wood he needed for a chair of another pattern.

"I wish Dorothy would heave in sight," he



Roger's Chair.

growled as he piled some half inch thick strips in one heap. "She told me she'd tell me all she knew about chair legs when I reached this stage of proceedings."

"She will," answered a cheerful voice, and gray-eyed Dorothy appeared from the house. "I felt in

my bones that you'd be beginning this lot this afternoon, so I ambled over to see if I could help in any way."

"Keep right on ambling till you reach this end of the platform and tell me whether you said that chair legs could be made of this stripping or whether I'll have to get solid pieces, square-ended, you know, joist or scantling or whatever it's called."

"Strips will do, only you'll have to use two for each leg. Nail them together at right angles. It will make a two-sided leg, but it will be plenty strong enough, though perhaps not truly handsome."

"If handsomeness means solidity—no. Still, they'll do. Can you give me the lengths for these strips?" and Roger waved his saw at his cousin as if he were so impatient to begin that he could not wait to study out the lengths for himself.

"For the one I made for the attic," replied his cousin, "I cut four strips each two inches wide and twenty-one inches long for the front legs and four strips each two inches wide and twenty-five inches long for the back legs. Then there were two two-inch strips seventeen inches long to go under the seat to strengthen it front and back, and two two-inch strips each thirteen inches long to go under the seat and strengthen it on the sides. That's all the stock you need except the box."

"I suppose you've got a particular box in mind to fit those sizes."

"Those sizes fit the box, rather. Yes, I got a grocery box that was about eighteen inches long and thirteen wide and eleven deep. I saw one here just like it before I gave you those measurements, so you can go ahead sawing while I pull off one side of the

box—the cover has gone already but we don't need it."

Quiet reigned for a few minutes while they all worked briskly.

"Now I'm ready to put this superb article together," announced Roger. "How high from the ground does the seat go?"

"Nail your cleats across with their top edges fifteen inches from the ground and nail the bottom of the box on to the cleats. See how these two-sided legs protect the edges of the box as well as make it decent looking?"

"So they do," admitted Roger. "They aren't so bad after all."

"I think those sides are going to be too high," decided Dorothy after examining the chair carefully and sitting down in it. "Don't you think it pushes your elbows up too high?"

Roger tried it and thought it did.

"Suppose you saw those sides down about five inches."

Roger obeyed and Dorothy tried the chair again and pronounced it much improved.

"It's comfy enough now, but these arms don't look very well, and they'd be liable to tear your sleeves," she said. "Let's put on some strip covers. They'll give a finish to the whole thing, and hide the end of the two-sided legs and be smooth."

"Plenty of reason for having them. How many inches?"

"Twelve," answered Dorothy after measuring. "The top of the back needs a strip cover, too. Cut another nineteen inches long. There, *I* think that's not such a bad looking chair!"

"How did you learn all this, Dorothy?" asked James. "This chair is more elaborate than the furniture you made for your attic, and I thought that was pretty good."

"Once when Mother and I were in Chicago I went to a settlement there where a clever woman was teaching some boys how to make useful things out of boxes, whole ones and pulled apart ones. Since we've been in Rosemont Mother took me in to New York one day to see an apartment that this same lady has furnished entirely with what she calls 'box furniture.' She's written a book about it—Mother gave it to me at Christmas—so I got some ideas out of that and some I made up myself."

"I take off my hat to you," remarked Roger. "You have ideas of your own and you know how to make use of other people's."

Dorothy blushed.

"O, that's nothing," she said. "Ideas keep growing if you think hard enough."

"Do you want cushions for those chairs?" inquired Ethel Brown, appearing at the door with a piece of cretonne in her hand. "We've got material enough for at least seat cushions for both of them."

"They'll be lots more comfy," admitted James, "if the excelsior crop is still holding out."

"It is. I'll make them right off, and Ethel Blue can help you out there."

She retired from view and sent out her cousin, and until the sun set the two boys and Dorothy and Ethel measured and sawed and nailed, with results that satisfied them so well that they did not mind being tired.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MANTEL CUPBOARD

THE hemming of bed and table linen, the stencilling of curtains, the upholstering of old furniture and the making of new had occupied so much time that it was well on in July before the U. S. C. found an opportunity to frame in passepartout the collection of madonnas that had been given them by a Rosemont lady. They found themselves gathered one afternoon in the dining room of Rose House, their materials spread before them on the bare table, and a promise of lemonade encouraging them to finish their task promptly.

Mrs. Schuler had taken all the women and children into the pasture to pick blackberries, and the veranda was deserted except for Mr. Emerson who had strolled over to see how matters in general were progressing and what the club was doing. Miss Merriam had brought Elisabeth, but Mrs. Schuler had begged to borrow her for the afternoon and she had gone berrying with the rest.

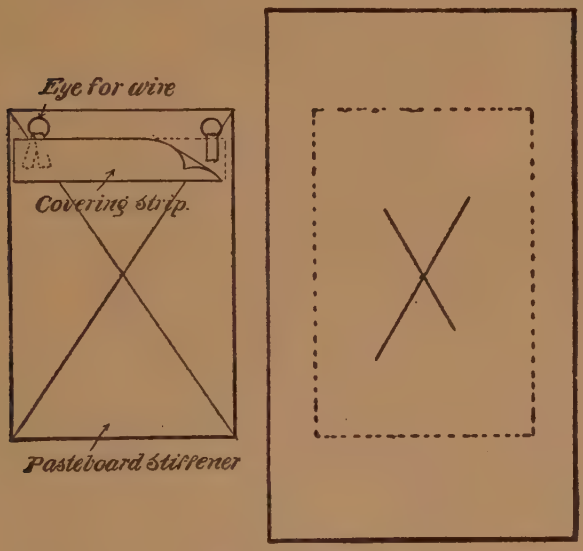
"I wish we could have had these on the walls, from the very beginning," sighed Helen, turning over the sheets.

"I don't think it has made much difference," consoled Margaret. "They've had a lot of magazines and picture books that people have sent in, and they've found the house as good fun as a picture, and these we're doing now will come as a novelty."

"Perhaps you're right. Some of these slimsy ones we'll have to mount."

"Let James do that; he's the really skilful paster."

James made a wry face but reached over for the pictures whose frailty made it wise to give them a firm backing. He found their centres by laying a



Framing in Passepartout.

ruler from one corner to the diagonal corner of the back and lightly drawing a line connecting them. He did the same with the other two diagonal corners. The point where they crossed was the centre of the picture.

Then he did the same on the face of the piece of cardboard which was to serve as a mount, except that he drew the lines only for a short distance in the middle of the card, where he knew that they would

be sure to be covered by the picture. Covering the back of the picture with a smooth coat of paste he laid the exact centre of the picture on the exact centre of the backing and pressed them together, using a clean bit of white cloth—it happened to be his handkerchief—to smooth one upon the other. The final move was to lay the now mounted picture under a heavy pile of magazines to stay until the paste was quite dry, so the finished surface would be uniform.

Fortunately for the amount to be accomplished during the afternoon it was not necessary to mount many of the pictures for most of them were firm enough. Helen had trimmed them all so that they were of two sizes and she had bought glass for them of two " stock sizes " so that it did not have to be cut and thus incur extra expense. They had supposed that they would have to send to New York for the paper to bind the edges, but Ethel Brown, hunting through the counter boxes of the English stationer whom all Rosemont people visited for stationery, newspapers, soda and ice-cream cones, discovered rolls of passepartout binding and brought it home in triumph. Ethel Blue and Dorothy had cut the pasteboard backs for all the pictures, so that the work of the afternoon was merely the putting of them together.

"That takes a steady hand," commented Grandfather Emerson, who had wandered in from the porch and stood looking over the shoulders of the toilers.

" Della's the only one who gets nervous and shakes," remarked Della's brother.

This witticism was received with joy by its hearers,

for Della was placid and rosy and roly-poly and didn't know the meaning of nervousness.

"Lay the cardboard on the table and the picture on the cardboard and the glass on the picture—that's the beginning, I see," Mr. Emerson went on. "The hard part comes when you bind the whole thing together. You have to press hard—so—and evenly—so—and pull it tightly enough to make it smooth and not so tightly that it tears. Then you press them all just as James pressed his mounted pictures. How are you going to hang them?"

"Roger has a few of the patches with attached rings left over from the 'Handy Boxes' he made for Christmas. When they are used up we'll slip a small brass ring on to a bit of narrow tape and paste the ends of the tape onto the back of the pasteboard."

"The picture wire or cord runs from one to another—I see. They don't look very tidy, though."

"You're very critical, Grandfather! Just to please you I'll paste a square of paper over the ends of the tape. There—do you like that better?"

"Much. I like to see things well finished."

"Me, too. I must inherit the liking from you. But I don't always do it when I'm in a hurry."

"What a charming old room this is," said Miss Merriam, looking up from the task beneath her fingers. "The low ceiling and the beams and the wide fireplace and the cupboards at the side of the mantelshelf—it doesn't take any imagination at all to people the room with the brave old colonists and their wives and daughters."

"There's a story about those mantel cupboards you spoke of," returned Mr. Emerson. "It's all

written down in the big family Bible. I'll show it to you some time."

"Can't you tell us the story while we work?" asked Dorothy.

"Why, yes, I dare say I can remember it. If I forget any part I don't doubt these grandchildren of mine can supply it—they've heard me tell the tale often enough."

"Which one is it?" asked Roger. "About the Indian prisoner?"

"No, the Revolutionary lover."

Roger remembering, nodded without looking up from his work.

"It was Roger's great-great-great-grandfather who lived in this house at the time of the Revolution. He had numerous sons and daughters, according to the list in the Bible."

"Those old chaps had enormous families; they must have filled this room up solid."

"The other half of the house had been built on by that time. The youngest daughter was the heroine of the tale."

"I wonder what she looked like," mused Helen, her head on one side as she regarded her growing pile of passepartouts.

"Her fond parent didn't describe her. He says, however, that she was 'sixteen years of age and well built and strong.'"

"That sounds very modern. I thought girls of that day were of the languishing kind that fainted away if a strong wind blew."

"That was seventy-five years later. The Revolutionary girls had too much to do to be lackadaisical. This great-great-grandaunt was an attractive girl,

whatever she was like, for when a young British officer came to the house one night with a troop of his men and demanded shelter he fell in love at first sight with the fair one."

"How perfectly thrilling," exclaimed Della. "Did she fall in love with him?"

"Apparently she had a weakness for him, though it wouldn't do to admit it before her strongly loyal father and brothers."

"It's just like some of the stories of the maidens and their lovers in the days of King Charles and Oliver Cromwell," smiled Helen, who was fond of fiction with a background of history.

"What was his name?" asked Margaret.

"A very high-flown name, Algernon—Algernon Merriam."

"'Algernon Merriam?'" repeated Miss Merriam. "Isn't that strange—that was my great-great-grandfather's name."

"It was?" everybody cried.

"Where did he live?"

"When did he live?"

"Was he a Tory?"

"Tell us about him?"

Miss Gertrude put her hands over her ears.

"I don't know very much about him, except that he lived in New York, but I've always been especially interested in him because he was the first one of the family to come to America and because I am named after his mother—Gertrude."

"'Gertrude Merriam,'" repeated Mr. Emerson musingly. "What else do you know about him?"

"Only that he was a British officer who came over here at the time of the Revolution and married an

American, a country girl, and stayed in America after the war was over."

"Do you know his wife's name?"

"Not her last name — the first was Patience. I have their wedding ring with their initials on it."

She pulled a slender chain from the neck of her dress. Hung from it was a worn gold ring which still showed the engraving "A. M. to P. E."

"I used to wear it on my finger," explained Miss Gertrude, "but it was getting so thin and the lettering was becoming so rubbed that I thought I'd better keep it where it wouldn't be injured."

"You haven't the slightest idea what the wife's last name was?"

"Only that it began with E, because the ring says so. I know her first name because I have her Prayer-Book. On the fly-leaf is written 'Patience, from her loving husband, Algernon Merriam' and the date, '1785,' and on another blank page is 'Algernon Merriam, from his mother, Gertrude Merriam, 1775.'"

"His mother gave him the book when he came to America, probably, and he gave it to his wife when they were married," guessed Ethel Blue.

"I don't know the date of their marriage."

"I believe I can help you to that," interposed Mr Emerson. "Roger, run to the house and ask your grandmother to let you have the big Bible — the old one with the record."

"Yes, *sir*," responded Roger, starting off with a speed encouraged by his curiosity.

"I'm inclined to think that you've landed here in Rosemont among your distant relatives," said Mr. Emerson.

"You think that 'Patience' was your great-aunt?"

"When you hear the story that our Revolutionary ancestor set down in the Bible you'll see that it matches yours so well that it must apply to the same people."

Roger came back panting with the big book under his arm. Mr. Emerson opened it and speedily found the place.

"Here it is," he said. "This is John Emerson writing. He tells the names of all his children. Then he says, 'My youngest daughter, called Patience, had reason to exercise that virtue. In 1776, just before the battle of Trenton, a young British officer, Algernon Merriam by name, leading a small band of soldiers to join the British forces, stopped at our house and fell in love instantly with my daughter, who waited upon him at table, myself and my sons not being numerous enough to forbid him and his men entrance to the house, enemies though they were. They went on their road the next day, but only after the officer had made so clear his admiration for my daughter that her brothers were sore displeased and spake harshly to her after his departure, saying that it was unseemly she should attract the notice of a man on his way at the moment to slay, perhaps, her own neighbors, perchance her very brothers."

"Poor little Patience," murmured Miss Gertrude.

"'After the defeat of the British at Trenton, and again but eight days later at Princeton, the young man appeared ŏnce more and demanded shelter, and again he had men enough with him so that it was not prudent to refuse — for although the Americans had

won victory in two battles, yet were we unprotected in the house, my sons being all with the American army, and I in bed with a wound in the leg given me by a red-backed rascal in a skirmish just before Trenton.' "

" ' Red-backed rascal ' is good," grinned Roger. " I'm sorry to think you're descended from a Tory, the companion of ' red-backed rascals ' Miss Gertrude."

" But I'm also descended from a sturdy loyalist, if Patience's father was my great-great-great-grandfather, as well as yours."

" Bull's eye! "

" ' Again he spoke fair to my daughter Patience,' " Mr. Emerson read on, " ' though she was cold to him, remembering what her brothers had said and also feeling not warmly to one who had but yesterday met in fight her dearest friends. Yet ever and again he re-appeared at our house, sometimes with soldiers, later alone, though he ran the risk of capture by us. Yet that we could not do, for although he was our enemy we came to like him well, and wished only that he might see his error and join the Continentals. Yet would Patience hear none of this, for, said she, " a soldier may not desert his leader in time of danger, whatever he may do when war is over." ' "

" Even the fierce brothers had to agree to that," said Tom with a nod.

" ' Almost we fell under suspicion by our neighbors because of the friendliness we felt for this enemy. Yet we thought they understood, until a later time when we felt not sure. But that was long after Algernon and Patience came to an agreement that they would marry when the war was ended.' "

"Oho! They were really engaged during the war!" exclaimed Ethel Brown.

"'I think it was not the red of an officer's coat that drew the attention of my daughter,'" Mr. Emerson continued.

"He wants to square her with succeeding generations," remarked Roger frivolously.

"'He was a young man of excellent character, only for the fact that he was British. Also his mother had died of a sudden but a day or two before he sailed to America and he mourned her loss so bitterly that he won the sympathy of my gentle Patience.'"

"Does he mention what this Algernon's mother's name was?" asked Miss Merriam eagerly. All the others stopped working and leaned forward to hear the answer.

"We'll see. 'Often he showed us a Prayer Book that his mother had given him to take to America, bearing in it his name "Algernon Merriam, from his mother, Gertrude Merriam, 1775."' There you are!"

"It's the very same one!" screamed Ethel Brown, rising and fairly prancing with excitement, while Dicky threw his arms around Miss Merriam and kissed her and Helen pressed her hand.

"If there's anything that I can do with perfect propriety, I'd be glad of the chance to welcome you demonstratively into the family," said Roger solemnly.

Everybody laughed and Miss Merriam's eyes were misty at this expression of affection from people who had grown into her love.

"This is a really wonderful outcome of a pleas-

ant acquaintance," said Mr. Emerson. "It's a commonplace to say that the world is small, but there isn't anything else to say about happenings like this. You are some kind of cousin — we must figure out just what it is — to Roger and Helen and Ethel Brown and Dicky."

"You're all so kind — I can only say that I'm glad to belong to the same family," murmured Gertrude.

"Let's hear the rest of the story," Dorothy begged.

Mr. Emerson took up the big book again.

"'It was seven years from the time of his first visit before he could claim his bride — seven years of strife and of the distress of body and mind that war brings. Several times came our enemy friend to us, sometimes not for six or eight months, again at shorter intervals. Once he begged permission to leave with us a leathern pouch containing all his money, "For," said he, "if I lose the gold pieces there'll be no money for my bride." Together he and I looked into the bag and he set down on a piece of paper all it held. There were 573 pieces of Guinea gold, and a miniature of his mother painted with delicacy, a woman fair of face with large blue eyes.' I see you've inherited them," Mr. Emerson interrupted himself to say. "'Set round it was with small brilliants and on the gold back was engraved her name —"Gertrude Merriam."'"

"How I'd like to see it!" cried Gertrude.

"'Then was there also a ring shining with several large diamonds which he said was most dear to him, being his mother's that he took from her dead finger. That, too, was marked "Gertrude." He wanted

Patience to wear it, but that would I not permit, not only for its great value and the esteem in which he held it but because so to do would cause questions by our neighbors.' "

" Shrewd old gentleman," commented Roger.

" ' We thought they knew not of this compact by which I kept the pouch, but later I was doubtful. When all the gold pieces were counted and the miniature and ring placed in a small wooden box on top of them, then Captain Merriam, for he had been promoted from his lieutenancy, tied the mouth of the pouch firmly with a cord and sealed it with his signet ring, and together we put it in the right-hand cupboard beside the fireplace in the room at the right of the front door, pushing it well toward the back and fastening the door with nails that showed not on the outside.' "

" ' The right hand cupboard of the room at the right of the front door,' " repeated Roger. " Why, that's this room we're in this minute! "

" And this was the cupboard, the one on the right hand side of the fireplace," and Ethel Brown ran to the fireplace and threw open a small door at the height of the mantel shelf.

Helen followed her and peered in over her shoulder.

" It isn't there now, children. Come back and hear the rest of the tale," implored Dorothy.

" Can't you see those two men right here at this table counting over all those gold pieces and looking at the miniature of Miss Gertrude's great-great-great-grandmother and holding the ring up to the light to see it sparkle? O-oh! " exclaimed Ethel Blue.

"He says it was seven years before Algernon could come to claim his bride," said Helen thoughtfully. "That must have been after the surrender of Cornwallis in 1783."

"He was with Cornwallis, the story goes on to say, and he resigned from the army and came North as soon as he could after the surrender. Here's what Grandfather John has to say about it; 'It was late in November after the Surrender when Captain Merriam rode up to my door and Patience went out to meet him and he kissed her openly before us all and said that he had come to make her his wife and to take her with him to New York. There was joy in the heart of my little Patience, but not much delight from her brothers because they could not easily forget that the man she wished to wed had been their enemy but yesterday. Into the house we went and after dinner Captain Merriam asked me for the pouch that he had left with me, "For in it," he said, "is the fortune that must support my wife till I establish myself in the colonies." I went to the cupboard and drew the nails and thrust in my arm — and the leathern bag was not there!'"

"How perfectly thrilling!" cried Ethel Brown.

"Poor little Patience," sympathized Ethel Blue. "What did they do?"

"'I was fair distraught, for not only was the loss of treasure great, but it had been left in my care and I felt that it would not be unnatural for our guest to distrust one who had been the enemy of his king. I trow my face was blanched when I thrust in again and again and found naught.'"

"Blanched is correct," exclaimed Roger slangily.

"'Algernon searched, my sons searched, Patience

and her mother searched — all in vain. We plunged a candle into the darkness, but saw nothing, and we bent a stout wire and ran it into crannies where not a farthing bit could lodge, so small were they. When at last we ceased the hunt I turned to the Captain and told him that I saw how ill I was placed in his mind. He was a gentleman and he replied instantly that no blame could ever rest on me in his mind or on any member of my family. This was handsome of him, for my sons had not always been cordial and the needs of the American army had been sore, and there were not a few who would have suspected that the money had been taken for the army. Not so Captain Merriam. He looked us frankly in the face and shook our hands and absolved us every one from blame. Then I began to wonder if my neighbors had been as ignorant of our British visitor as we thought and that fact have I never decided to this day, for never have I had a clue as to what became of the pouch.' "

A cry of disappointment went up from all the group around the table.

" O, do you mean that he never did find all that money? That nobody ever found it? "

" Evidently your great-great-great-grand thought that some loyalist neighbor must have taken it for the army, because he speaks once or twice of the neighbors being suspicious of their friendship with Merriam."

" I hope it did the army a lot of good since it had to spoil the family romance," laughed Helen. " Did they get married without any money? "

" Here's the end of the tale. ' Without the treasure in the pouch the Captain was penniless, and now

it was that little Patience more than ever needed the virtue indicated by her name.' "

"I should say she did," ejaculated Della. "She had waited seven years already."

"She was destined to wait two more," said Mr. Emerson. "Merriam went to New York and was there at the time of the Evacuation on the 25th of November, 1783. 'His friends pressed him to return to England,' the account goes, 'but he stated that his heart was in the new country and that he would stay and make his fortune here. That he did, but it was two years later before he wed my patient Patience.' "

"That's the date in my Prayer Book," said Gertrude, "1785."

"He gave his wife his mother's Prayer Book," said Ethel Blue softly, and she pressed Miss Gertrude's hand under the table, for although the new relationship did not affect her, as she was a cousin of Ethel Brown's through her father and not through her mother, she had lived all her life with her cousins and any happiness that came to them was hers also.

"There was a time," James recalled, "when old Roger declared that there was no romance left in the world. Here's a romantic tale right before our eyes."

"Isn't it!" exclaimed Margaret. "A story of hidden treasure and a delayed marriage — why it couldn't be excelled!"

"Except," added Mr. Emerson, "by the way in which we found out this afternoon that Miss Gertrude here is our relative as well as our friend."

CHAPTER IX

TROUBLE AT ROSE HOUSE

"IF it weren't that I could come out here and see you every day or so I should be wild to get back to work in Oklahoma."

Edward Watkins was the speaker. He and Miss Merriam were walking through a wooded path that ran from Rosemont to Rose House. The day was warm and the shade of the trees was grateful.

"How is your patient?" asked Gertrude.

"Getting on very well, but the doctors won't let him travel yet."

"Have you heard lately from your doctor in Oklahoma?"

"I hear about every day! I was with him just long enough for him to find that I was useful and he's wild to have me there again. I wired him that I'm ready to go, but that the sick man is nervous about making the return trip alone. Of course he wants to keep on the good side of a good patient, so he answered, 'Stay on.'"

"Are you able to do anything for your patient? He's still in the hospital, isn't he?"

"I go there every day and he sends me on errands all over town. I'm getting to know almost as much about oil as I do about medicine! But I'm rather tired of playing errand boy."

"You have a chance to see your family."

"And you. But I'm supposed to stay at the

hotel, much to Mother's disgust. I'm doing a little medical inspection among Father's poor people, though. That whiles away a few hours every day, and of course, every time I go to the hospital the doctors there tell me about any interesting new cases, so I'm not 'going stale' entirely."

"As if you could!" exclaimed Gertrude admiringly. "You're just storing up ideas and information to startle the Oklahoman natives with."

"The 'natives' in Oklahoma are all too young to be startled," laughed Edward, "but of course I'm stowing away everything new I hear about methods of treatment and operations and so on to tell Dr. Billings when I get back. Now let me hear what you've been doing."

"A perfectly thrilling thing happened a few days ago," and she told him of the discovery of her relationship to the Emersons.

"The children thought it was just like a story in a book," she said, "and I think so myself. Don't you think it is wonderful? To be living with these people and to love them as I do and then to find that we really belong to each other?"

"I certainly do, but you mustn't forget that you also belong to some one else."

"I never forget that," laughed Gertrude.

"How do you pass your days?"

"The same round. There's always Elisabeth."

"She does you credit. She's as fat as she ought to be."

"She gets tired more quickly than most children, but otherwise she shows no sign of her hard life last summer and fall, and she's never ill."

"How are these kiddies at Rose House?"

"I want you to look them over and talk with the mothers. Dr. Hancock comes over when we send for him, but all these people are so delicate that I feel that they ought to have a physician's eye on them all the time."

"They have you pretty often, don't they?"

"I go over every day either in the morning or the afternoon, and I give them advice about the babies, and teach them and Moya how to prepare their food, but they do such strange things that you can't forestall because you never had the wildest idea that any woman in her senses would treat a baby so."

Edward laughed.

"Russian and Bulgarian peasant customs, I suppose. I never shall forget the first time I saw a two-day old negro baby sucking a bit of fat bacon. I nearly had a chill."

"Didn't the child have a chill?"

"Not the slightest! If they get ahead of you with some pleasing little trick like that you can console yourself with the thought that generally there is some basis of old-time experience that has shown it to be not so harmful as we are apt to think."

"I've done enough tenement house work to know that the babies certainly survive extraordinary treatment, but these babies here are so delicate that they ought to have the most careful diet. Most of them need real nursing."

"Do you think your talks are making any impressions on the mothers?"

"Sometimes Mrs. Schuler and I think so, and just then it almost always happens that one of them does something totally unexpected that gives our hopes a terrible blow."

" Let's trust that this is a good day; I'd rather talk to you than work over a case this fine afternoon."

Gertrude smiled at his tone and they walked on in silence out of the wood and across the brook and down the lane that brought them to the back of Rose House where the Club boys and girls were busy making a piece of furniture of some sort. Mrs. Schuler was talking to Moya in the kitchen.

" I've brought Dr. Watkins to see everybody," announced Miss Merriam gayly. " Where are they all? "

" The ones who are at home are up in the pine grove, but Moya has just told me that Mrs. Paterno and her older boy and Mrs. Tsanoff and one of the twins have gone to town."

" Walked? "

" Walked by the road on this scorching day! "

Miss Merriam turned to the doctor.

" This is one of the unexpected events we were just talking about. Little Paterno is four and too large for that little woman to carry, and far too small and weak to take that long walk on his own legs even on a more suitable day than this, and the Tsanoff twins are just holding on to life by the tips of their fingers! "

She sat down in despair. Dr. Watkins looked serious.

" Is there any way of heading them off or bringing them back. Can we reach them anywhere by telephone? "

" No one knows where they can have gone. It seems it must have been about an hour and a half ago that they started and I should think they'd be back before long if they're able to come back —"

"— under their own steam!" finished the doctor with a doubtful smile.

"Let's go to the grove and see the women and children there and perhaps the others will be in sight by the time you've finished your examination."

They turned toward the pines whose thick needles cast a heavy shade upon the ground and gave forth a delicious fragrance under the rays of the sun. As they disappeared Mrs. Schuler went out on the plat-

"We're Going to Make Two of these Seats."

form where the carpentering operations were going on.

"I'm so disturbed about those women," she said, "I've come to see what you're doing to divert my mind from them."

"We're going to make two of these seats, one for your office and the other for the veranda," said Ethel Brown, standing erect and putting a hand upon her weary back. The rest of the young carpenters stopped their work and wiped their perspiring foreheads while they explained the construction of the piece of furniture to their friend.

"This long narrow box is the seat, you see. It's

a shoe case, and it's just the right height for comfort. Roger has put hinges on the cover, so you can use it for a chest and keep rugs and cushions inside."

"That's about as simple as it could be. Does it take all of you to help Roger do that?"

"O, that's only a part of the entire affair. We're making these two sets of shelves to go at the ends of the seat."

"I see. A great light breaks on me!"

"They're to be fastened to the ends of the seat."

"Not for keeps. That's Ethel Blue's patent. She said it would be awkward to move about if it were all built together, so we're making it in three parts, and we're going to lock them together with hooks and screw eyes."

"That is clever! Then if you want to you can use these sets of shelves for little bookcases in another room or you can fasten on one of them and not the other."

"Whichever is most convenient."

"Let me see how they are made."

"We took two boxes as long as this seat box is wide and took off the covers and laid them one on top of the other on their sides."

"That gives you a bookcase right off."

"That's what I said," remarked Roger airily. "Stick them together with glue and there you are."

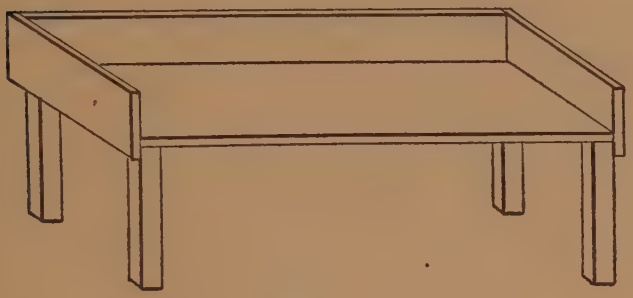
"You haven't fastened them together yet."

"There is a strip three inches wide to go across the top and another to cover the joining of the two boxes and a third to cover the lower edge of the bottom box. There are three more on the back just like them, and three on each end."

"They give it a neat appearance."

"Don't they? At each of the four corners we put two three-inch strips at right angles, just the way Roger made the legs of his chair. They look like legs and they strengthen the corners. Four strips around the top edges finish that part. Perch the whole on casters, and it will move easily."

"Where do the hooks and screw eyes go?"



Bed Tray.

"The screw eyes go on the back legs at about the level of the shelf, and the hooks go on the seat at the right height to lock into them."

"I think I shall keep them all locked together in my office," decided Mrs. Schuler.

"The seat for your office is to be painted white and the one for the veranda is to be stained, so that if it gets weather-beaten out there it won't look very bad."

"Ethel Blue and I thought we'd make pink cushions for your office if you'd like them."

"I think they'd be charming. That pink room raises my spirits when —"

"— when you get *blue?*" suggested Roger.

" I'll have to go there now to get revived if those women who walked to town don't turn up soon," and the Matron went to the corner of the house whence she could see the lane that led from the road. " If they come home ill I'll have to ask you to make two bed trays," she suggested as she peered across the grass.

" How do you make them? "

" Ask Ethel Blue."

" Merely put legs on a light board so that the weight of the plates will be lifted from the sick person's legs as he sits up in bed."

" What's to prevent the plates sliding off? "

" Nothing if he's much of a kicker, I should say," laughed Roger; " but you could put a little fence an inch or two high at the back and sides and keep them on board."

" You'd better begin them right off," said Mrs. Schuler dryly, " for here they come."

She disappeared around the corner and the young people followed to see what was the matter.

Trouble there was in very truth. Mrs. Paterno led the way stumbling and running. Her face was flushed a deep, threatening crimson and her breath came fast. By the arm she held little Pietro, who from exhaustion had ceased to scream and merely gave a gulping moan when the gravel scraped his bare knees as his mother jerked him along regardless of whether he was on his feet or whether she dragged him. Behind them at some distance came Mrs. Tsanoff carrying her baby in her arms — one of the twins that always seemed to be merely " holding on to life by the tips of its fingers," to use Gertrude's expression, and now seemed to have lost even

that frail hold. It lay in its mother's arms, white and with its eyes closed.

Mrs. Schuler ran to meet the Italian woman and lifted the worn child into her arms where he sank against her shoulder as if in a faint.

"Run up in the grove and get Dr. Watkins and Miss Gertrude," Helen said to Roger. "Ask them quietly to come here. Don't frighten the women."

Roger dashed away, his swift feet slowing to a walk as he neared the bit of woods where he delivered his message in an undertone. Ethel Blue, meanwhile, had rushed into the house to tell Moya to heat plenty of water and to crack some ice, and Margaret had opened Mrs. Schuler's closet of simple remedies and found the bottle of aromatic spirits of ammonia. Ethel Brown and James ran to meet Mrs. Tsanoff, Ethel taking the baby from her and James steadying her shaking steps by a stout arm under her elbow.

As Dr. Watkins ran around the corner of the house he came upon Helen trying to help Mrs. Paterno, who was pushing her away with both hands, while she kept looking over her shoulder and screaming hysterically. Edward seized her hands and commanded her attention at once by speaking to her in Italian. Although she did not know him she responded to his command to tell him of what she was afraid, and poured out a story of terror. "*Mano nera, mano nera* — the Black Hand," she repeated over and over again, and Edward, who had heard her history, realized that something she had seen had set her mind in the old train of thought. While Miss Merriam attended to the children he calmed the woman and then turned her over to Mrs. Schuler

with instructions to put her to bed in a darkened room and to see that some one stayed with her or just outside her door.

Fortunately for the doctor his experience with the people among whom his father worked in his East Side chapel had given him a smattering of many languages and he was able to make out from Mrs. Tsanoff, although her fright and fatigue had made her forget almost all the English she knew, what had terrified her companion. They had gone to the stationery shop of the Englishman who also sold ice cream and soda, she said, and they had had each a glass of soda and the children had each had an ice cream cone.

Edward groaned and over his shoulder directed Della to run and tell Miss Merriam that both babies had had ice cream cones. "It will help her to know what to do until I come," he explained.

Just as they were coming out of the store a dark man who looked like an Italian had passed them. So far as she noticed he had paid no attention to them, but Mrs. Paterno had seized her arm, pointing after him, and then had picked up Pietro and started to run toward home. Neither far nor fast could she go in such heat with such a burden and the poor little chap was soon tossed down and forced to run with giant strides all the rest of the eternal mile that stretched between Rosemont and Rose House. Mrs. Tsanoff herself had followed as fast as she could because she was afraid that something, she knew not what, would happen to her friend.

She, too, was sent to bed, with Moya standing over her to lay cool compresses on her eyes, to sponge

her wrists and ankles with cool water and to lay an occasional bit of cracked ice on her parched lips.

The condition of the two children was pitiable. The heat, the sudden chill from the ice cream and the terrible homeward rush sent them both so nearly into a collapse that the doctor, Mrs. Schuler and Miss Merriam worked over them all night, resting only when Dr. Hancock, who had heard the story from James and Margaret and came up to see the state of affairs, relieved them for an hour.

"How are we ever going to teach them the madness of such behavior?" Gertrude asked wearily as Dr. Watkins insisted that she and Mrs. Schuler should go to bed as the dawn broke.

"The poor little Italian woman is almost mad already, thanks to this Black Hand business. It will take her a long time to recover her balance, but I think I can teach the others a lesson from this experience of their friends. Wait till to-morrow comes and hear me talk five languages at once," he promised cheerfully as he turned her over to Mrs. Schuler.

CHAPTER X

A FILE OF DUCKS

THE escapade of the Italian and Bulgarian women played havoc with the calm of Rose House for several days. The women themselves had narrow escapes from illness and the children were so seriously ill that a trained nurse had to be sent up from the Glen Point Hospital, as neither Miss Merriam nor Mrs. Schuler could undertake nursing in addition to their other work.

When all was well again Miss Merriam redoubled her efforts to teach the women something of proper care of their children and themselves, and, with the help of Dr. Watkins's knowledge of languages, she began to hope that she was making some progress. Mrs. Tsanoff and Mrs. Peterson, who had little babies, were taught to modify milk for them, the dangers of giving small children foods unsuited to their age was talked about now with the recent experience to point the moral; and ways of keeping well in hot weather were explained and listened to with interest.

Substitutes for meat were discussed earnestly, chiefly on account of the high cost of living but also because meat was declared to be far too heating for warm weather use. Each of the women knew of some dish which took the place of meat and she was glad to tell the others about it. Mrs. Paterno knew

very well that cheese is one of the best substitutes for meat that there is.

"Americans eat cheesa after meata; then sick," she declared with truth. Her receipt for a risotto Moya wrote down in the blank book in which she was collecting receipts and Mrs. Paterno beamed when it came onto the table.

A little chopped onion had been fried in the pan first. Over it was spread a layer of boiled rice; over that came a layer of cheese, either grated or cut in very thin slices. More rice and more cheese enriched the combination and a beaten egg on top of all turned a delicate brown in the oven in which the dish was baked until the topmost layer of cheese was thoroughly melted.

"Very good," was the universal compliment that pleased both Mrs. Paterno and Moya, and the latter was soon trying baked macaroni with grated cheese on top, and cheese omelets, and rice and tomato with a hint of onion below and a dash of cheese above.

Mrs. Vereshchagin was wise, like all Russians, in the making of soups. To be sure, she had not learned much about soups made entirely of vegetables until poverty had enlightened her in this country, but she remembered the delicious cereal preparations that are put into nearly all soups in Russia after they are on the table, just as rice is served in our own southern states. The circulars distributed in New York from Mayor Mitchell's office had taught Mrs. Vereshchagin and her neighbors the value of keeping the water that rice or peas or barley or beans or lentils or carrots or turnips had been boiled in to add flavor and richness to soup. A stew made of various vegetables cut into small bits and boiled to-

gether made, they found, a hearty and satisfying meal.

None of them had been able to afford cream soups because milk in New York costs so much that there never is any for the family after the babies have had theirs, and the babies are lucky to get it. Because cream soups were a luxury they all clamored delightedly over Moya's and begged her to tell how she made them so that they might copy if ever the time came when they could have milk to spare. Moya told them that she made a white sauce in the proportion of two cups of milk to one tablespoonful of flour and one of butter. First she melted the butter, then she thickened it with the flour, then she added the milk. To this she added the corn or asparagus or celery or green peas or beans that she had previously cooked and mashed and thinned until it made about two cupfuls.

Beans and lentils were Mrs. Peterson's strong point. She had found their value to be great, as a substitute for meat, her only objection to them being that they required a long time to cook. This she had learned to prevent, in part, by soaking them overnight. Helen who heard her talking about it, explained the fireless cooker to her and helped her make one at Rose House, both that Moya might save fuel for the house and that the women might learn how to use it. Their amazement at what it could do was great.

" Miss Dawson, our domestic science teacher, told us there ought to be five kinds of foods in every meal," said Ethel Brown one day. " I wish I could make them understand that."

She tried, but whether they did understand or not

she did not know until Edward Watkins came out again and she made him act as her interpreter. There ought to be protein, she told them, to replace meat, and cheese and beans and nuts were the best providers of that; there ought to be starch, and potatoes, rice, wheat bread furnish that; there ought to be the fat of butter or oil; there ought to be sugar, either from the cane or molasses or that of beets or corn or other sugary vegetables. Then there ought to be some green stuff, such as spinach or a leaf of lettuce or some fruit. In all vegetables there is some of the mineral matter that is necessary for digestion and bonebuilding, so the ordinarily well person does not need to think about providing that especially.

"Peanuts — fine American food," pronounced Mrs. Tsanoff, and the doctor agreed with her.

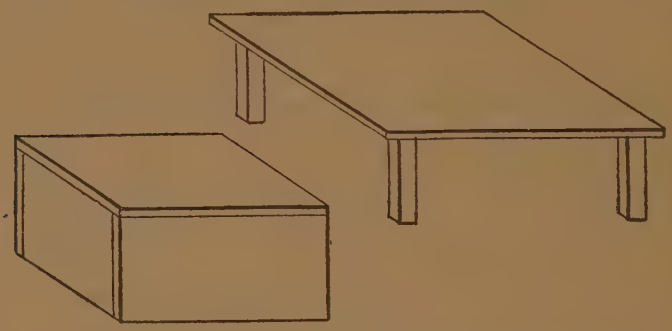
"They taste best roasted," he said "but they're most nourishing raw. You have to chew them a lot, though, so they're easiest to eat when they're made into a paste with butter."

"Peanut butter; that's great for sandwiches," said Ethel Brown.

Chiefly for the purpose of giving the little Italian woman a change of thought, the U. S. C. made a point of providing Rose House with some sort of entertainment every few days. Once they introduced the inmates to an American hayride, and the four women, with Moya and the older children, screamed with delight as they found themselves moving slowly along on a real load of hay — for Grandfather Emerson declared that that was the only kind of hayride worth having.

Again they all stowed themselves away in the

automobile and went to a pond ten miles away for a day's picnic. That proved not to be a success, for everybody was so tired all the next day that there was a nearer approach to disagreement among them than ever happened before. Mrs. Schuler made up her mind that home — meaning Rose House — was the best place for them and that amusements must be found at home and not afield. Mrs. Paterno was especially upset by fatigue and the Matron feared



Footstools.

that her steady improvement under Dr. Watkins's care might be entirely counteracted. To keep her quiet she took her with her to the berry pasture where they spent a peaceful afternoon picking berries and trying to exchange experiences about America.

The group left on the veranda, sewed and napped while the larger children played on the grass before them. The Ethels and Dicky came over with Roger to stay while he nailed together some footstools for the women to use on the porch. A small plain box answered the purpose for some of them and four short legs with a top served for others.

The Ethels had meant to do some carpentry, too,

but the afternoon was warm and they were tired from their walk, so they decided to amuse the children and do no hammering until another day.

For a time they were too tired even to play, and sat on the edge of the veranda, watching the babies roll about on the grass, and listening to the strange jumble of languages that came from their infant throats. Young Paterno, aged four, little Vereshchagin, five, and Olga Peterson three years old, could say " All right " and " Bully " and some other English words not so pleasant to hear. The Ethels wondered if the remarks they made in other tongues were of the same kind. Strangely enough, the children seemed to understand each other sufficiently well for purposes of amusement, and any one of them who wanted to propose a new game made it clear to the rest in some mysterious fashion without apparent trouble. Dicky joined the throng, and because he was almost two years older than the oldest, seemed to become a leader immediately, though his commands were issued chiefly in the sign language.

Only one incident marred the quiet of the afternoon. Ethel Blue noticed the absence of the two-year old Paterno and as the Italian family was very much on everybody's mind she went around the house to hunt him up. Under an oak on the lawn she spied a pair of gingham rompers and made her way at once to the spot to see what made the baby so unnaturally still. Not a muscle moved as she approached, yet the little fellow must be wide awake, she thought, for he was standing. His back was against the tree as close as he could shrink, his tiny palms thrust forward as if to ward off an enemy.

Ethel broke into a run as she came near enough

to see this attitude and to guess at its meaning. What Luigi's opponent was she could not tell, but she thought that perhaps one of her grandfather's turkeys or geese had wandered away from home and she knew that either of those fowls makes a formidable opponent. Her imagination even went so far as to picture a rattlesnake whirring his tail at the terrified child.

Terrified he certainly was. He was stiff with fear. Ethel forgot the heat and ran fast. Even when she was quite near she could see nothing to frighten the baby and she began to think that he had had a sudden foreknowledge that he was to be an actor when he was grown and was already practicing for the stage.

It was not until she was close to the tree that she saw the cause of his disturbance. A comfortable gray squirrel, made fat by the generous feeding of the Allen children and so tame that he ate from their hands, was standing reared on his haunches before the boy, whisking his tail and doing his best to ask for crumbs. Even when Ethel came running up he did not move, and when she sat down on the grass to show the baby that there was nothing to fear from this small enemy, he jumped into her lap and made himself entirely at home. A cooky in the pocket of her middy blouse satisfied him and he leaped away and scampered up the oak. Little Paterno gazed up after him with relief written on his small features and uttered the name of the one animal with which the city streets had made him familiar —" Horse."

Ethel laughed and led him back to the porch, where he joined the other children and apparently told his adventure to his brother, who listened in-

tently to what sounded to the Ethels like a mere jumble of sounds.

" I'm positively too tired even to watch these children," confessed Ethel Blue. " I believe I'll go in and see what Moya is doing and perhaps lie down on the sofa in the hall."

" I'm tired, too. You'll find me in the grove when you want me."

So the cousins separated, leaving Dicky and the children still playing before the veranda where the mothers — Bulgarian, Russian and Swedish — and the tiny babies dozed farther and farther over the borderland of sleep. Even Roger's whistle died away from his workbench behind the house. He had gone off to the shade of an apple tree.

It may have been an hour later that Ethel Brown, lying on the pine needles in the grove and dozing like the rest, heard a wild shriek from inside the house. She rushed through the back door into the hall where she found that Ethel Blue had just sprung from the sofa and was running over the stairs. Roger came in by the front door at the same time, and he and Mrs. Schuler, who had returned from her walk but recently, it seemed, since she still had her sunbonnet on, joined the upward move, Mr. Schuler gazing after them as he swayed on his crutches. The women began to come in from the veranda, dazed with sleep but holding tightly to their babies.

Piercing shrieks continued to ring out from the upper story.

" It's Mrs. Paterno," flashed through every mind, not only because she was the only one missing from the family group, but because all of them had been disturbed about her since her fright in Rosemont.

When she recovered she had told Dr. Watkins that she did not know the Italian she saw and that he made no sign to her — she thought he did not even look at her — so they knew that she was in no danger from her fellow-countrymen, but that she was threatened by serious hysteria.

Ethel Blue and Mrs. Schuler were the first to reach the head of the stairs and they found that the screams did indeed come from Mrs. Paterno's room. She was standing in the middle of the floor shrieking "My children, my children! Gone! Gone! *Mano nera! Mano nera!*"

Mrs. Schuler tried to quiet her.

"The children are all right," she insisted over and over again. "They are all right."

She kept her eyes fixed on the Italian's face in an effort to pacify her. Without turning her head she said to Roger, "Bring the children here."

Roger jumped down the stairs three at a time and out of doors to the spot where the children had been playing when he had last noticed them.

Not a child was in sight and not a sound betrayed their whereabouts. He ran wildly around the house, meeting at the back door the distracted Mrs. Paterno who had rushed from her room after him, followed by the Matron, the Ethels, Moya and her Bulgarian, Swedish and Russian friends, still carrying their babies, no longer silent but yelling lustily.

The procession swept by Roger who gazed after them in wonder while he cudgelled his brains to think of the next place to look for the absent children.

"She's headed for the pond; I'll bet she thinks the Black Hand has thrown the children in or else she's going to throw herself in," he thought, looking

after them as they ran up the lane. "Poor soul, if she could only realize that the pond is so dry that you could put it into a water pitcher for dinner she wouldn't get so excited. The kids couldn't drown unless they lay on their faces, and then they'd only just about get a good drink!"

On went the throng and out of sight, their voices coming but faintly to his ears.

"Why am I standing here?" he wondered suddenly. "I might as well go too. The young ones certainly aren't anywhere about these diggings."

He, too, ran up the lane after the weeping women. Silence fell on the house abandoned by every occupant except Mr. Schuler who hobbled to the back door and gazed on the empty scene untouched by any sign of life. Shaking his head wonderingly he lighted his pipe and he, too, disappeared.

Roger sped on, and, being light of foot, soon caught up with the rearguard. The van, he saw as he looked ahead, was turning from the lane at the end of the fence and advancing into the woods in pursuit of Mrs. Paterno. She ran on as if she knew where she was going. Perhaps her instinct told her; if so, she was the only one possessed of the information.

Before Roger could reach the Ethels, who were well to the fore, another wild cry fell on his ears. This time it seemed to be a cry of joy. He hurried as fast as he could. They were all turning back toward the house and following the lane fence on the other side. When they came to the brook they stopped at what the Morton children had always called the "pond," which was really only a widening of the shallow stream into a pool. Here the women

lined up along the bank, and Roger arrived in time to see Mrs. Paterno fling herself upon his brother Dicky and hold him up in the air as if he had been of the weight of her own two-year-old instead of a sturdy lad of nearly seven. Dicky was pale with fright at the sudden attack, and Roger rushed forward to rescue him. As he stood on the edge of the brook he could not help bursting into laughter at the sight that met his eyes. Right down the middle of the stream, the water flowing gently round their rompers, sat every one of the missing children, and Dicky had been plucked from the proud position of leader of the file of ducks.

With a shake that seemed to relieve her mind entirely Mrs. Paterno dropped her victim and pounced upon her own offspring. She lifted them regardless of their dripping garments and carried them off, one under each arm, Mrs. Peterson did the same for her daughter, and Mrs. Vereshchagin gathered up both her boys.

" Dicky, Dicky," exclaimed Ethel Brown in a tone of remonstrance, " what possessed you to do such a thing! "

But Dicky was squeezing the water out of his rompers and did not condescend to answer.

CHAPTER XI

A NEW KIND OF GRASS SEED

DOROTHY and the Ethels were sitting under the tree in which lived the squirrel that had caused such uncomfortable emotions in the little Paterno. At the moment he was skirmishing for cookies on the outskirts of the group. The girls were, however, too busy talking to pay much attention to him. It was the day after Mrs. Paterno's outbreak caused by Dicky's attempt to amuse the children, and the discussion was about her.

"Edward Watkins says she's on the verge of hysteria, whatever that is. I wish there was something we could do for her."

"The quiet out here ought to help. She isn't likely to see many Italians to start her thinking about the Black Hand and there won't be many excitements like yesterday's to stir her up."

"Why didn't the other women get excited yesterday when they found their children were out of sight?"

"Perhaps they were worried only they didn't show it."

"And she set up that awful uproar when she was worried because she couldn't control herself, I suppose. That must be the difference."

"If that's the reason why couldn't she be taught or helped to control herself? If she could be made to understand that she's doing herself and her chil-

dren harm and upsetting other people she might make an effort to 'keep on the mat' as the Danish people say, when something unexpected happens."

"Poor soul, such a fearful, unexpected thing happened when her husband was killed that she probably thinks that all unexpected things are going to end awfully."

"If she thinks about it at all."

"Can't she be made to think about it?"

"Nobody but Edward Watkins knows enough Italian to talk to her and when she gets excited she forgets the little English she knows. Let's ask him to tell her that she's making herself ill by letting herself be so afraid of the Black Hand all the time and by being so anxious. Don't you know how you get sort of paralyzed when you worry about things? That's what happened to me when I was afraid I wasn't going to pass my geography examination in June. I believe I really shouldn't have passed it if I hadn't made up my mind that I was going to do my best to pass so I'd better stop worrying about it and make my best better if I could."

"If Dr. Watkins could make Mrs. Paterno see how she had done some real harm just one time by going off the handle this way perhaps she might remember it when something upset her again or when she began being anxious again."

"I should think she had had one good lesson when she brought Mrs. Vereshchagin home from Rosemont on the run and nearly killed the two children."

"The run wasn't the whole cause of their illness; don't forget the ice cream cones!"

"Well, take yesterday. If he could make her understand that there isn't anything on the place here

that could hurt the children. As Roger said, they'd have to try mighty hard to get drowned in the brook, it's so dry, and there isn't a horse nearer than Grandfather's, nor a cow nearer than the pasture, nor any steep place that they can fall down, and the gate is always kept shut into the road so they can't stray out there and get run over —"

"But she thought they had been kidnapped."

"So she did, poor soul. But if she could just understand that it isn't any use to cry until you're sure you're hurt! And if she could see that she worked all the other women up into a state of fearful excitement and distressed Mrs. Schuler."

"Edward Watkins would say that she was too weak now to be able to control herself, but I wonder if she couldn't be made to think about other things so much that she wouldn't have time to think about these things that frighten her."

"Your grandfather told me once about a field he had that was filled with daisies," said Ethel Blue. "It looked awfully pretty, but it spoiled the field for a pasture; the cows wouldn't touch them."

"I remember that field. We used to make daisy chains and trim Mother's room with them," said Ethel Brown.

"Mr. Emerson tried ploughing up the field and he had men working over it for two seasons, but on the third, up they grew again as gay as you please. They acted as if he had just been stirring up the soil so they would grow better than ever."

"Poor Grandfather; he had a hard time with that field."

"He said he really needed it for a pasture, so he made up his mind that if he couldn't *root* out the bad

plants he'd *crowd* them out. So he bought some seed of a kind of grass that has large, strong roots, and he sowed it in the field. As soon as it began to grow he could see that there certainly were not so many daisies there. He kept on another year and the cows began to look over the fence as if they'd like to get in. The third year there were so few daisies that they didn't count."

"I remember all that," said Ethel Brown, "but what does it have to do with Mrs. Paterno?"

"Why, if we — or Edward — could make her get a grip on herself and control herself that would be like Mr. Emerson's digging up the daisies. It would be hard work and an awfully slow process. But if we also could fill her mind with thoughts about working for her children and trying to make other people happy and with making embroidery which she loves to do, why wouldn't it help? These new things she's thinking about would be like the strong, new grass seed that didn't give the weeds a chance to grow."

Dorothy stared seriously at Ethel Blue.

"She does perfectly beautiful embroidery," she said slowly, as she tried to think out a way to put Ethel Blue's suggestion into effect. "Do you suppose she'd be willing to teach us how to do it? That beautiful Italian cut work, you know. If we should call ourselves a class and ask her to teach us it might give her something quite new to think about."

"I'd like to learn, too," agreed Ethel Blue. "I heard Mother say once that there was a school in New York for Italian lace work. Let's get Della to find out about it, and when Mrs. Paterno grows stronger and goes back to the city she might go

there. They have a shop uptown where they sell the pupils' work. The class here and the prospect of having regular employment when she went back —"

"Work she likes."

"— might give her a new interest now and give her hope for the winter so she wouldn't have time to think *'mano nera'* every time Pietro goes around the corner."

"What are you youngsters plotting?" asked the cheerful voice of Grandfather Emerson, who came around the big oak from the grass grown lane so quietly that they did not hear him coming.

They told him their plan, and he listened intently.

"The poor little woman has had such a shock that it will be a long time before she can control herself, I'm afraid," he responded sympathetically, "but I believe you've hit on the right way."

"Then we'll get Edward Watkins to ask her whether she'll be willing to teach a class, and we'll all join it."

"The other women might like to learn, too."

"Perhaps they could teach. Bulgarian embroidery has been fashionable lately, you know, and the peasant women do it."

"Your grandmother and I went through a Peasant's Bazar when we were in Petrograd and there were mounds of embroidery there that the peasant women had made."

"The Swedes do beautiful work. Why don't we have a class for international embroidery?" laughed Dorothy. "I think Mother would like to learn the Russian; she's crazy about Russian music and everything Russian."

"We'll ask Mother and Grandmother, too, and perhaps the Miss Clarks would come and the women could charge a fee and make a little money teaching us and be amused themselves."

"I dare say it will do the others good as well as the little Italian. You've hit on something that will benefit all of them while you were trying to help Mrs. Paterno," surmised Mr. Emerson. "What I came over here this morning to see you about was this," he went on in a business-like tone that made them look at him attentively. "Grandmother and I think that Mrs. Paterno has been a trifle too exciting for you young people the last few days. We think you need a change of thought as well as that young woman herself."

They all sat and waited for what was coming, quite unable to guess what proposition he was going to make.

"Helen and Roger are somewhat older and stand such upheavals a little better than you girls, so my plan doesn't include them."

"Just us three?" asked Ethel Brown.

"Just you three. Here's my scheme; see if you like it. I have to go over to Boston to-morrow on a matter of business and it occurred to me that it would be a pleasant sail on the Sound and that you'd be interested in seeing the city —"

"O — o!" gasped Dorothy; "Cambridge and Longfellow's house."

"Concord and Lexington!" cried Ethel Brown.

"The Art Museum!" murmured Ethel Blue.

"And Bunker Hill Monument, and, of course, the Navy Yard especially for this daugher of a sailor," and he nodded gayly at his granddaughter.

"Grandmother will go, to take you around when I have to attend to my business, and we can stay a day or two and come back fresh to attend to Mrs. Paterno's affairs. How does it strike you?"

Without any preliminary conference the three girls flung their arms around his neck and hugged him heartily.

"Have you talked about it with Mother and Aunt Louise?" asked Ethel Brown.

"I'm armed with their permission."

"I guess we were all worrying about Mrs. Paterno," admitted Ethel Blue. "This will be the strong grass seed that will clear up our minds so that we can help her better after we come back."

"I think you're the most magnificent Grandfather that ever was born!" exclaimed Ethel Brown, standing back and gazing admiringly at her ancestor.

"Thank you," returned Mr. Emerson, bowing low, his hand on his heart. "I am quite overcome by such a wholesale tribute!"

"Had we better tell Mrs. Schuler about the embroidery class plan?" asked Dorothy.

"Run up to Rose House now and explain it to her and ask her to talk to the women about it while you are gone, and then when you get back she'll have it all ready to start," Mr. Emerson suggested.

The next twenty-four hours were full of excitement. Each of the girls had only a small handbag to pack, but the selection of what should go into each bag seemed a matter of infinite importance. The Ethels filled their bags twice before they were satisfied that they had not left out anything that would be wanted, and Dorothy confessed that she had first put in too much and then had gone to the

other extreme, and that it had not been until after she had had a consultation with her mother that she had decided on just the number and kind of garments that she would need for a two-day trip to the Hub of the Universe.

"Why is it called that?" she asked of Ethel Brown.

"I asked Mother and she said that people from New York and other cities used to say that Bostonians thought that their town was the centre of civilization. So they guyed it by calling it the 'Hub.'"

"I've heard it called the 'Athens of America,'" said Ethel Blue.

"That was when there was such a crop of great writers there all at about the same time," explained Roger, "Longfellow and Lowell and Whittier and Emerson and all those men. Boston thought a great deal of herself then —"

"I should think she had a right to."

"She did; but the rest of the U. S. A. liked to tease her about being the literary centre of America, just as Athens in the time of Pericles was the intellectual centre of Greece."

"Where is the literary centre now?"

"Who knows? Gone westward like the frontier and the Star of Empire. Indiana claims that she has made many writers famous. Chicago says that not much of anything worth while is written east of the Chicago River. It's one of those things 'no feller can tell.'"

"I wish you were going, too, Roger," said Ethel Brown. "You'd enjoy it so much."

"Helen would, too, and she knows a lot about the early history of Boston. But we'll have our

chance some other time and we're awfully glad you kids are going now."

Roger and Helen went into New York with the travellers and Della and Margaret were on the pier to see the steamer leave.

"We haven't been doing this since we all went to the French Line Pier to see Mademoiselle off," recalled Ethel Blue.

"And James got kissed by the enthusiastic Frenchwoman! I never shall get over that!" and Tom roared as freshly as if he had not shouted over it a score of times before.

It was a glorious afternoon and the boat slipped around the end of the Battery while the westering sun was still shining brilliantly on the water, touching it with sparkles on the tip of each tiny wave. The Statue of Liberty, with the sun behind it, towered darkly against the gold. The huge buildings of the lower city stretched skywards, the new Equitable, the latest addition to the mammoth group, shutting off almost entirely the view of the Singer Tower from the harbor, just as the Woolworth Tower hides it from observers on the north.

"The illumination of the Singer Tower is one of the prettiest sights I ever saw," said Grandfather Emerson. "The Equitable and the Woolworth will have to work hard to give us something to replace it."

"Della said the other day that once in a while the Woolworth Tower was superbly lighted," said Ethel Blue. "It was as delicate as the Singer and there was more of it — a pillar of golden mist, she called it."

"Here's the Metropolitan Tower coming into

view now. That doesn't attempt any special lighting beyond the clock and the pineapple on the very top."

"It's a wonderfully graceful piece of architecture," said Mrs. Emerson, "and it's surprising how it stands out when you see it from a distance. I was driving over Brooklyn Bridge the other day and I was amazed at its height above the buildings around it."

"There's nothing near it to crowd it, and nothing very tall between it and the East River."

Between them Grandfather and Grandmother Emerson were able to point out nearly all of the sights of the East River — several parks and playgrounds, Bellevue Hospital, the Vanderbilt model tenements for people threatened with tuberculosis, the Junior League Hotel for self-supporting women, the old dwelling where Dorothy's friend, the "box furniture lady," had established a school to teach the folk of the neighborhood how to use tools for the advantage of their house-furnishings.

"Just here, where we're sailing now, there used to be a reef. It made the channel so narrow that the current was very swift through it and the passage for ships was dangerous."

"Was that Hell Gate?" asked Mrs. Emerson.

"The name describes the feeling of the sailors toward it. The reef was blown up a few years ago and now you see it is comparatively peaceful here."

Along the shores of the Bronx the scene became more and more rural until cows standing to be milked and hens flapping sleepily up on to their roosts became the rule and not the exception. The girls were sorry to go down to dinner and it was only

when the view of the land grew less interesting and the passing steamers and the tugs towing long lines of barges became fewer that they were willing to leave the deck even to satisfy their hunger.

The interior of the boat made them ask a hundred questions, for it was unlike either the battleship *Florida* which the Ethels had gone over when Lieutenant Morton was attached to it, or the steamer on which Mademoiselle Millerand had sailed, or the *Washington Irving* on the Hudson. This floating night hotel needed as many staterooms as could be built in, and her sides were lined by windows of a size sufficient to let in a goodly amount of fresh air. The rooms were larger than those on the Atlantic liner, and the berths wider. The centre of the boat was made into "sitting rooms," as Dorothy called them, one above another, the upper extending like a gallery around an opening through which the lower could be seen. The dining room was large and the Emerson party secured a table to itself and ate a hearty meal.

"The salt air sharpens one's appetite," murmured Mrs. Emerson.

"Don't apologize, Mother," laughed her husband.

"I'm not apologizing; I'm explaining," replied his wife briskly.

On the deck again, they found that the moon had risen and was casting its cool light across the water. They were out in Long Island Sound now, the bulk of the Island looming on the right, and the Connecticut coast line showing its glimmering lights on the left. The air was soft yet fresh and salty, and long after they were almost too sleepy to keep awake,

the girls were glad to stay up, because they were enjoying the new experience so intensely.

They found their stateroom entirely comfortable. The Ethels slept in the wide lower berth and Dorothy climbed to the upper.

The boat was one of those which steams around Cape Cod instead of stopping at Fall River, Rhode Island, and sending its passengers to Boston by train. Early morning found them all on deck watching the waters of Massachusetts Bay and trying to place on a map that Mr. Emerson produced from his pocket the towns whose church spires they could see pointing skyward far off on their left. Twin lighthouses they decided, marked Gurnet Point, the entrance to Plymouth Bay, and they strained their eyes to see the town that was the oldest settlement in Massachusetts, and imagined they were watching the bulky little *Mayflower* making her way landward between the headlands.

Farther along was Marshfield, the home of Daniel Webster, the orator. Still farther Minot's Ledge Light rose from the water, the rocks on which it was built being entirely covered at the stage of the tide. Grandmother recalled that when she was a little girl she had gone up into the light, sitting in her mother's lap in an armchair that whirled and struck the side of the tower as it was drawn up from the small boat in which they had come out from the shore.

When they were making their way among the small islands of the harbor Grandfather in his turn remembered that when he was a boy he had visited a cousin in Boston. The two boys had gone to the wharves to look down the harbor and had seen some elm trees on one of the islands waving their branches

against the sky. The slender trees with their foliage increasing toward the top made them think of the pictures of palm trees in their geographies, and they went home and told their parents that they had seen the coast of Africa.

Two or three forts added a picturesque note to the crowded harbor, whose ships and steamers were threading their way among the islands, some turning southward into Dorchester Bay and others northward toward Winthrop. Straight ahead rose the city topped by the gilded dome of the State House.

"How it has changed since I last came in by steamer!" exclaimed Mrs. Emerson. "Then there were not many tall buildings along the water front and the town seemed to slope upward to a climax in the dome. It's not so regular now."

The girls were divided as to whether they thought it more beautiful than New York harbor. Ethel Blue and Dorothy thought it more picturesque, but Ethel Brown liked the grand sweep of the Hudson and the East River uniting at the Battery and plunging on out to sea through the Staten Island Narrows.

Mr. Emerson convoyed his party to a hotel on Copley Square and left them there while he went out at once to meet his business friends.

"Take the girls to the Public Library and to Trinity Church this morning," he advised his wife, "and if I finish early this afternoon I'll go with you to Cambridge."

Dorothy gave a little shriek of delight.

"How far away Rosemont seems, and poor Mrs. Paterno with her troubles," she said an hour later as they stood before Sargent's panel of the Prophets in the Public Library.

CHAPTER XII

LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

ABBEY'S painted story of the Holy Grail held Ethel Blue enthralled. Mrs. Emerson and Ethel Brown were most interested in the misty coloring of the French artist, Puvis de Chavannes, in the entrance hall of the Library, the delicate hues glimmering faintly against the yellow marble sheathing of the stairs.

"It's as unlike the New York Library's wide spaces as New York is unlike Boston," commented Mrs. Emerson, "but one is quite as handsome as the other."

From the Library they went across the square to the church built by a famous architect and consecrated by the loving service of one of the greatest-hearted of America's clergymen — Phillips Brooks. They were all impressed by the beauty of its dusky coloring and the richness of its varied windows. Ethel Blue, who had received a Phillips Brooks calendar for Christmas, was especially impressed at seeing the church to which the great preacher had drawn young and old by his eloquence and his gift of himself to all who needed. His figure beneath a canopy just outside the building, seeming to draw inspiration from the Christ behind him, held them silent before it.

Grandfather Emerson was a Harvard graduate, so

that a return to Cambridge was going home to him. He led the girls from one building to another, bubbling over with reminiscences of his college years. From the new "Gold Coast" dormitories where the rich young men live he turned away, uninterested, and showed them instead the plain old brick halls that have sheltered the young manhood of some of the strongest men that America has produced.

"Here is where I nearly had my clothes torn off my back on Class Day," he exclaimed exultantly. "The alumni sat on the ground around the edge of the little square hemmed in on three sides by buildings. Every now and then a group of them would give the class yell or would recognize an old friend and spell his name or would cheer some member of the faculty kept young by the affection of generation after generation of boys."

"Where were you sitting?"

"I was standing, but I kept my eye on the spot where I knew your grandmother was. We were engaged. Do you remember, you wore a pink dress that day?"

He patted his wife's hand absent-mindedly, and she smiled at him, dim-eyed.

"Helen has one that reminds me of it. Your grandfather was a dreadful looking young man when he came in to the tree exercises;" she took up the story. "He had been going about with my mother and me and I was as proud as possible of my handsome escort. It was something of a blow to have him appear dressed like a tramp."

"What was the reason?"

"The graduates had to climb a tree and bring down some flowers that were tied in a great wreath

about the trunk about eight or ten feet above the ground. It was a tremendous scramble that would have meant destruction to good clothes."

"I succeeded in getting a posy or two for you, didn't I?"

"I never shall forget how excited I was when you came over and gave them to me. It was really more thrilling than when they sang the Ode and I knew that you had written it!"

The two old people were quite lost to the present in the remembrances of the past. The girls had to recall them by questions.

"Where is the library?"

"Can we see the glass flowers?"

"Is that Memorial Hall with the tower?"

They all chattered at once, but Mr. and Mrs. Emerson never really touched the twentieth century again all the afternoon but walked about with faintly reminiscent smiles upon their lips. Neither the aged limbs of the elm beneath which Washington reviewed his troops, nor the buildings of Radcliffe College, to which Ethel Brown hoped to go after she left the high school, nor the grounds of Elmwood beneath whose trees the poet Lowell had walked and mused, nor the spot where the house of Holmes, the poet, had stood, roused them from the memories. It was only when Dorothy literally pranced with joy at actually setting her foot on the doorstep trodden by Longfellow that they realized that the old happiness had taken on a new form.

"O, just think that all these wonderful people walked along these streets just like any other boys," cried Ethel Blue as they passed along beneath the elms that make Cambridge beautiful. "Holmes

and Longfellow didn't look any different from any young men, any different from Roger or Tom or James. Isn't it just like a beautiful butterfly coming out of an ugly cocoon!"

"Roger and Tom and James representing the ugly cocoons?" asked Mr. Emerson laughingly. "You aren't very polite to your family and friends!"

The giris laughed, too, and returned to the hotel in high good humor over the success of their afternoon of exploration.

At ten o'clock the next morning they started for Lexington and Concord. The first part of the trip was over the route by which they had reached Cambridge the day before, but, once the University buildings were left behind, the road was new to them as it unfolded toward Arlington.

"We're going now over exactly the route that the British soldiers followed when they marched out to Lexington during the night of the 18th of April, 1775," Mr. Emerson informed them, and the chauffeur pointed out tablet after tablet erected to mark the spot where some event of the march took place.

"I don't much like the inscriptions on these tablets," remarked Ethel Brown. "Almost every one of them tells of the killing or capture of some loyalist farmer by the British."

"You bloodthirsty little thing! Do you want them to record the killing of the British?"

"If there had to be killing it's natural I should want it to be the enemy and not the Americans."

"Isn't that just what war does to all of us!" exclaimed Mrs. Emerson. "We should shudder at the bare idea of wishing the murder of a human be-

ing; we should be shocked at the idea's entering our minds. Yet here is this child wishing that a British soldier had been killed where the stone stands."

"O, Grandmother, I — I'd rather nobody was killed," cried Ethel Brown, wincing under the accusation.

"War doesn't seem actual to us unless we've really seen something of it or have had it brought home to us in the thousand ways it is being done by the present war."

"Helen believes that we all think too much about war all the time," said Dorothy.

"I think we do," agreed Mr. Emerson. "If we thought as much and as hard about peace as we do about war I believe we would have peace and that wars would cease from off the earth."

"Let's try it," suggested Dorothy. "Every little bit helps. Is this Lexington?" she questioned excitedly as the automobile drew alongside of a typical New England village green. Three of the houses which looked on it had stood there on the day of the battle.

Near the road a boulder carved with musket and powder horn marked the thin line of American Minute Men, only sixty or seventy strong, who had been warned by Paul Revere of the approach of the British and were drawn up here at four o'clock in the morning to await their coming. Their brave young captain, Parker, instructed them in the words cut into the stone: "Stand your ground; don't fire unless fired upon; but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here."

"O, it does excite you, even if you do believe in peace!" confessed Dorothy, clasping her hands.

"Major Pitcairn was the leader of the British," Mr. Emerson explained. "He had about seven or eight hundred men. When they came to this spot and found the Americans ready for them he shouted 'Ye villains, ye rebels, disperse! Why don't ye lay down your arms?'"

"They didn't disperse; not a bit!" glowed Ethel Brown.

"The British fired on them and killed eight Minute Men and wounded ten. It was the first blood shed in the Revolution. Here is what Dr. Holmes says about it: —

"On the smooth green where the fresh leaf is springing
Calmly the first-born of glory have met;
Hark! the death-volley around them is ringing!
Look! with their life-blood the young grass is wet!
Faint is the feeble breath,
Murmuring low in death,
'Tell to our sons how their fathers have died;'
Nerveless the iron hand,
Raised for its native land,
Lies by the weapon that gleams at its side.

"Over the hillsides the wild knell is tolling,
From their far hamlets the yeomanry come,
As through the storm-clouds the thunder-burst rolling,
Circles the beat of the mustering drum.
Fast on the soldiers' path
Darken the waves of wrath,
Long have they gathered and loud shall they fall;
Red glares the musket's flash,
Sharp rings the rifle's crash,
Blazing and clanging from thicket and wall."

The roadside house where Hancock and Adams were sleeping on the night of the 18th and where

they were awakened by Paul Revere, held infinite interest for the girls in its old furnishings and its quaint arrangements.

On they went to Concord on the trail of the British regulars who had heard that the Continentals had military stores hidden in that town and who were on their way to destroy them.

"Weren't there more than sixty or seventy Minute Men at Concord?" inquired Ethel Blue.

"Between four and five hundred had assembled from the surrounding farms. They gathered here at the bridge in Concord," explained Grandfather as the car stopped before a small rustic bridge. "The regulars were on one side of the stream and the Minute Men on the other. That's the way the Americans looked," and he waved his hand toward French's spirited statue of the "Minute Man."

The girls stared at him as if he were alive and the scene were peopled with his companions.

"Didn't Emerson write a 'Hymn' that was sung when an older monument than this was completed? I learned it once. Let see," said Mrs. Emerson thoughtfully. "I recall it now."

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

"The foe long since in silence slept;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

"On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive-stone;

That memory may their deed redeem,
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

"Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, or leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and thee."

"The British fired and Captain Davis of the Americans fell." Mr. Emerson continued his historical story. "Then the Americans returned the fire and wounded several of the regulars. They began to retreat toward Boston, and a stormy time they had of it."

"Did they get 'sniped'?"

"Every tree must have seemed to them to hide a sharpshooter," smiled Grandfather. "The farmers shot from behind stone walls and bushes and fences. An English officer wrote afterward that men seemed to drop from the clouds and that his troops were so tired that their tongues hung out of their mouths like dogs. In the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* of March 30, 1776, there were some verses supposed to be spoken by one of the regulars.

"For fifteen miles they follow'd and pelted us, we scarce had time to pull a trigger!
But did you ever know a retreat performéd with more vigor?
For we did it in two hours, which saved us from perdition;
'Twas not in *going out,* but in *returning,* consisted our EXPEDITION."

"When they came near Boston," continued Mr. Emerson after the laughter had ceased, "a company of regulars marched out to meet them and made a hollow square into which they ran for shelter."

"That does make it seem near and horrible," Ethel Brown said and they all shivered a little as they looked once more at the vigilant Minute Man alert to meet his country's foes.

"Now, where did Miss Alcott live?" asked Ethel Blue, and Mr. Emerson directed the chauffeur to turn the car toward that part of the little town to which literary pilgrims bend their steps.

"Ralph Waldo Emerson lived in this big, comfortable house with the cheerful yard around it," said Mrs. Emerson. "Over there is the School of Philosophy where Louisa Alcott's father explained his plan of living and beyond is Orchard House where the 'Little Women' of the story played and suffered."

"'Jo' was Miss Alcott herself, wasn't she? Just think, we're seeing the house she really lived in!" and all the girls gazed at it open-mouthed until Mrs. Emerson told them that they were passing the house where Hawthorne wrote "Tanglewood Tales," when they fell into a fresh trance of wonder. The ground on which the first Concord grapes were grown did not arouse a fraction of this enthusiasm.

"I truly believe this ride we've taken to-day must be the most interesting in America!" exclaimed Ethel Blue when the girls were back at the hotel and were talking over the experience of the last few hours.

"It has more history and literature to the square inch than any spot I ever heard of on this side of the Atlantic. I — I'm more excited than I was when we shook hands with the President last winter."

"That's the way I feel, too," agreed Ethel Brown. "I wonder why it is, for they say that Mr. Wilson

is one of the greatest presidents the country ever has had."

"I don't know why it is unless it's because you feel that these men had something to do with building up the brain of the country; and then we seemed to get in touch with such a lot of them at once."

"I never shall get over seeing the house that the author of 'Miles Standish' and 'Evangeline' and 'The Children's Hour' lived in," sighed Dorothy happily. "It's almost more than I can stand."

"Lowell and Emerson and Holmes and Longfellow were still alive when I was a student at Cambridge," said Grandfather Emerson.

"And you saw them?"

"Very often."

"Why didn't you tell us this morning?"

"You seemed to have about all the ecstasy you could hold. It didn't occur to me that my experiences would add to it."

"You've seen them all," and the three girls gazed on the old gentleman as if he were shining with reflected glory.

CHAPTER XIII

TROLLEYING

THE climb up Bunker Hill Monument, luncheon with a friend of Lieutenant Morton's at the Charlestown Navy Yard and the afternoon spent at the old State House, the "new" State House, Faneuil Hall, the church where the lantern was hung for Paul Revere, and the Museum of Fine Arts all were uninteresting compared with the great Lexington and Concord trip.

The monument, which they found to be much like the Washington Monument on a small scale, served to revive in their memories the tale of the battle of Bunker Hill when the farmer Americans were ordered not to fire "until you see the whites of their eyes" as the British regulars came up the hill to attack them, and to give General Joseph Warren his death wound.

The Navy Yard had no great novelty for the Ethels for many of their younger years had been spent in one or another of Uncle Sam's Navy Yards, but Dorothy was greatly interested in all that she saw in spite of her strong feeling for peace, and Mr. and Mrs. Emerson and the Ethels were glad to meet again Captain and Mrs. Thurston whom the Mortons had known at League Island many years before when the children were small.

The old State House and Faneuil Hall and the North Church were filled by the historical person-

ages whom Mr. Emerson brought to life for them. The codfish over the Speaker's desk was their chief interest in the "new" State House.

As for the Art Museum, they wandered delightedly from one room to another, but went away with a sensation of having seen too much that was almost as uncomfortable as that of having eaten too much.

"I should like to come here or to go to the Metropolitan in New York with some one who could tell me about every picture or every object in just one room and stay there for an hour and then go away and think about it," said Ethel Blue.

"We will do that some day at the Metropolitan," said Mrs. Emerson. "If the Club would like to go in a body some day we can get one of the guides who do just what you describe. We can tell her the sort of thing we want to see — classical statuary or English artists or the Morgan collection — and have it all shown to us from the standpoint of the expert critic. Or we can put ourselves in the hands of the guide and say that we'd like to see the ten exhibits that the Museum looks upon as the choicest."

"Either way would be wonderful!" beamed Ethel Blue, and the three girls promised themselves the delight of reporting Mrs. Emerson's offer to the Club at its next meeting.

The homeward trip was made by a route quite different from the one by which the party reached Boston. Grandfather proposed it at breakfast on the morning of the day on which they had intended to leave in the afternoon.

"Are you people very keen on this drive through the Park System to-day?" he asked.

The girls did not know what to say, but Mrs.

Emerson scented a new idea and replied "not if you have something to suggest that we'd like better."

"How would you like to trolley back to New York?"

"Trolley back to New York!" repeated the girls with little screeches of joy. "All the way by trolley? How long will it take? I never heard of anything so delightful in all my life!"

After such a quick and satisfactory response Mr. Emerson did not need to lay his plan before them in any further detail.

"I see you're 'game,' as Roger would say, for anything, so we'll go that way if Mother agrees."

Mrs. Emerson did agree and even went so far as to say that she had wanted to do that very thing for a long time.

"It's lucky Grandfather insisted that we shouldn't bring anything but small handbags," said Ethel Brown. "These little things we have won't be any trouble at all, no matter how many times we have to change."

They started in heavy inter-urban cars which rode as solidly as railroad cars and enabled them to be but very little tired at the end of the first "leg" of the journey. The wide windows permitted views of the country and the girls ran from one side to the other of the closed cars, so that they should not miss anything of interest, and sat on the front seat of the open cars into which they changed later, so that they might have no one in front of them to obstruct their view.

They went out of the city straight westward, through Brookline, which persists in not becoming a part of Boston although it is almost surrounded by

the city,— through Chestnut Hill, where is one of the reservoirs from which the city is supplied; past Wellesley, where they saw the college buildings rising among the trees on the left.

"There you have a contrast with Radcliffe," Mrs. Emerson suggested. "Wellesley is in the real country. Does the sight of it shake your inclination toward the Cambridge college?"

The girls shook their heads, but they gazed back at the tall trees through which the red bricks showed happily and the Ethels thought they'd like to look it over pretty thoroughly before they made their final decision. They remembered, too, that there lived and taught Katharine Bates who wrote "America the Beautiful" which they sang every day in school, and they wished that they might stop long enough to call on her and tell her how much they loved her poem.

Beyond Wellesley they passed Natick, famous for its shoes and its baseballs and as being the home of the shoemaker who was vice-president with Grant. At Framingham, where the state militia has its summer camp, the Ethels gazed with interest at the tents that sheltered the amateur soldiers, and felt sorry for their having to drill on a field so exposed to the terrible heat of the summer sun.

Beyond Framingham the car mounted through a pretty, wooded country, through small towns, each placed on a hill whose summit was topped by a church, always painted white with green blinds, and always built with a steeple that looked as if it were made for a handle whereby some giant might lift it.

"Do you know the nickname that has been given to Worcester?" Mr. Emerson asked his party.

No one did.

"'The Heart of the Commonwealth.' It is in the very centre of the little state. Massachusetts is just about a hundred miles east and west and about fifty north and south. It's a tiny place, you see, compared with New York or Pennsylvannia."

"But mammoth compared with Rhode Island," defended Ethel Brown.

"What is there to see in Worcester?" asked Mrs. Emerson.

"There are pretty drives all about the city," Mr. Emerson returned. "There's Lake Quinsigamond, which is a lovely body of water. It's a manufacturing town with a good many large mills, and there is a state normal school and a Roman Catholic College, and a university — Clark."

"And a Union Station, sir," contributed the motorman, who was listening to the conversation behind him. "I'm a Worcester man and we're as proud of that as we are of the insane asylum. They're both worth looking at."

"I should only care to go into one of them," smiled Mrs. Emerson in return.

It was a little early for luncheon, but Grandfather decided that it was better to have it at Worcester than to risk getting something on the road at some small place, and the next large stop, Springfield, was a long way off. They were refreshed by the meal and they furnished their bags with fruit so they might have the means of fortifying themselves if the pangs of hunger should strike them before they could reach their dinner haven.

"If you'll look at the map in your trolley book," directed Mr. Emerson as they placed themselves in

the car that was to take them to Springfield, "you'll see that our road goes sharply southwest now. Springfield is almost on the Connecticut line."

"Didn't Longfellow write a poem about Springfield?" asked Mrs. Emerson reflectively.

"'The Arsenal at Springfield,'" replied Dorothy promptly. "It's a great peace poem. Do you want to hear it?"

They all did, so the Ethels established themselves on the front seat that faced backwards, and Mr. and Mrs. Emerson leaned forward, and they all listened as the car rolled through the hilly farms of Worcester County.

"This is the Arsenal. From floor to ceiling,
Like a huge organ rise the burnished arms;
But from their silent pipes no anthem pealing
Startles the villages with strange alarms.

"Ah! what a sound will rise, how wild and dreary,
When the death-angel touches those swift keys!
What loud lament and dismal Miserere
Will mingle with their awful symphonies!

"I hear even now the infinite fierce chorus,
The cries of agony, the endless groan,
Which, through the ages that have gone before us,
In long reverberations reach our own.

"On helm and harness rings the Saxon hammer,
Through Cimbric forest roars the Norseman's song,
And loud, amid the universal clamor,
O'er distant deserts sounds the Tartar gong.

"I hear the Florentine, who, from his palace
Wheels out his battle-bell with dreadful din,

And Aztec priests upon their teocallis
Beat the wild war-drums made of serpent-skin;

"The tumult of each sacked and burning village;
The shout that every prayer for mercy drowns;
The soldiers' revels in the midst of pillage;
The wail of famine in beleaguered towns;

"The bursting shell, the gateway wrenched asunder,
The rattling musketry, the clashing blade;
And ever and anon, in tones of thunder,
The diapason of the cannonade.

"Is it, O man, with such discordant noises,
With such accursed instruments as these,
Thou drownest Nature's sweet and kindly voices,
And jarrest the celestial harmonies?

"Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error,
There were no need of arsenals or forts!

"The warrior's name would be a name abhorréd!
And every nation that should lift again
Its hand against a brother, on its forehead
Would wear forevermore the curse of Cain!

"Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, 'Peace!'

"Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of War's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals
The holy melodies of love arise."

"That line about the warrior's name being abhorred sounds rather severe, when I think of my

father and Ethel Brown's being in the Army and Navy," remonstrated Ethel Blue gently, "but it is a splendid cry for peace, isn't it? The part about the burning villages and the famine is just what we're reading about every day in the papers. I never really took it in when I first read it in Longfellow's poems a year or two ago."

"This war of to-day brings it all the more clearly before our imaginations," said Mrs. Emerson. "It is hard for any one to think quietly about the possibility of such hideous happenings."

"Imagine a pretty country like this invaded by soldiers who trampled crops and destroyed houses and killed human beings. It makes it seem real to imagine that we are refugeeing now and that a shell comes along and bursts right ahead of the car and kills that old man walking along and wounds that baby with a piece of shrapnel, and sets fire to that shed."

"It would certainly be disconcerting," remarked Mr. Emerson dryly. "I'm daily more and more thankful that our wise president is keeping us out of the trouble."

The party reached Springfield at dusk and had time to take a walk after dinner. They admired the elm-bordered streets and the comfortable houses, and they thought the Arsenal looked extremely peaceful outside in spite of its murderous activities within.

It was a deep sleep that visited them all that night. A whole day in the open air with the gentle but continuous exercise provided by the car made them unconscious of their surroundings almost as soon as they touched their pillows.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CONNECTICUT VALLEY

WITH a long and varied day ahead of them they were delighted to find the morning clear when they awoke.

"There are almost as many points of interest in the Connecticut River Valley as there are on the Concord and Lexington road," Mr. Emerson told the girls. "We're going first to Holyoke, which is one of the largest paper manufacturing towns in the world. I have a little business to do there and while I am seeing my man you people can take a little walk. Be sure you notice the big dam. It's a thousand feet long. The Holyoke water power is very unusual."

Perhaps because they were not experts on water power they were not greatly impressed by the floods of the Connecticut River diverted into deep canals and swimming along so smoothly as to impart but little idea of their strength. Only the whir of the great mills gave evidence that iron and steel were being moved by it.

What they could easily understand was the loveliness of the view from Mt. Tom, a low mountain just north of Holyoke. They changed from the regular trolley to a mountain climbing road and after a breathless ride at an acute angle they found themselves on the small plateau on which the Summit

House is built. Telescopes picked up the distant scene toward each point of the compass and the broad stretch of the river valley dotted with towns and banked in the west by the Berkshire Hills made a view of beauty and variety. Not far away fields shone vividly green.

"What crop do you suppose that is?" Ethel Blue asked. "It's a beautiful green."

"If we weren't in New England I should say it was tobacco," said Dorothy. "It looks just like the big tobacco fields around Durham, North Carolina."

"It is tobacco," replied Mr. Emerson. "Have you never heard of the Connecticut Valley tobacco? It takes a lot of work to bring it through the season without being frosted or scorched, but they do it. Over there you see, the plants are protected by white cloth."

"How Roger would enjoy this!" cried Ethel Brown, and "Wouldn't Helen be just crazy over all the history of this region?" added Ethel Blue, while Dorothy, who had travelled much but never without her mother, silently wished that she were there to enjoy it all.

"There's another girl's college of note," and Mrs. Emerson pointed out Mt. Holyoke at South Hadley, northeast of Mt. Tom.

"And we're going to see Smith College to-day! I feel as if I wanted to go to all of them!" cried Ethel Blue.

"You might take a year at each and find out which was best suited to your temperament," laughed Mrs. Emerson.

From the foot of the mountain they went northward again to Northampton.

"Here's where I ought to go if names count for anything," decided Dorothy.

"If all the girls named Smith who go to college anywhere should go here because of the name there wouldn't be room for any other students," said Mr. Emerson jokingly.

"They say," returned Dorothy on the defensive, "that in the beginning all the people in the world were named Smith and it was only those who misbehaved who had their names changed."

"You can at least pride yourself on their being an industrious lot. Think of all their crafts — they were armorers and goldsmiths, and silversmiths and blacksmiths."

"'Always busy, just like me,'" sang Dorothy to a tune that she and the Ethels had composed once when they could not find any music suitable for a game they had invented.

They wandered for an hour over the grounds of the college and saw much that interested them. The girls were just a trifle shaken in their allegiance both to Radcliffe and Wellesley, and they finally decided that before they made up their minds as to where they would go they would come again to Massachusetts and make a thorough investigation of each.

"Helen wants to go to Wellesley and Margaret says she's going to Cambridge so we'll have their experiences to judge by," they determined.

Eastward from the main line the trolley ran to Amherst.

"What's at Amherst?" asked Ethel Brown.

"Two colleges," answered Mr. Emerson. "There's a school of some kind at about every turn

in the Connecticut Valley. Amherst College is here and also the Massachusetts Agricultural College."

"That's nice for the Smith girls — to have their brothers and their brothers' friends near at hand."

"That's one reason why I should think Helen would like Wellesley," said Ethel Brown. "Roger will be at the Boston Tech for two of the years she's at college. It's so convenient to have a brother to go about with."

"Tech boys don't have much time to go about with their sisters or anybody's sisters," said Ethel Blue who had listened to Roger's account of the hard work that the technical students had to meet.

"Perhaps not, but it would be nice to have Roger somewhere around and I'm sorry he'll be through by the time we go."

"All off here," called Mr. Emerson from his seat behind them.

"Is this Amherst?"

"This is Hadley, but we're going to stay over a car here to see one or two interesting things."

"What a wide, wide street!"

"That's interesting in itself. You don't see a street like that in most villages. Did you ever hear of 'Fighting Joe Hooker'?"

"I have," returned Ethel Blue promptly. Because her father was in the army she had read much about famous American soldiers.

"Who was he?" asked Dorothy, who had not had the same reason for studying American wars.

"He was a West Pointer and fought in the Mexican War. In the Civil War he was a general on the Union side, in command of the Army of the Potomac

in 1863 and he was defeated by General Lee at Chancellorsville. He won his nickname by his dash and courage — yet he was born in this sleepy little village of Hadley."

"It's the spirit that's in the cradle and not the cradle itself," remarked Mrs. Emerson.

"Over here are some large rose gardens that are worth looking at," and Mr. Emerson led the way to a spot where even so late in a Massachusetts summer fifty acres of rosebushes were thriving and blooming in marvellous beauty. They wandered among them for as long a time as they could, and then Mr. Emerson showed them the house that had sheltered Goffe and Whalley.

"I do wish Helen was here!" exclaimed Ethel Brown. "Grandfather throws out a remark about 'Goffe and Whalley' and I never heard of the gentlemen!"

"Nor I."

"Nor I."

"Whisper it to us, Grandmother, so we won't be ashamed to look Grandfather in the face."

"You needn't be," smiled Mrs. Emerson encouragingly. "I should be much surprised if you had heard of them."

"Tell us about them," begged Dorothy of their guide.

"What do you know about Charles I of England?" asked Mr. Emerson by way of reply.

"Charles I? He was the English king who fought with Oliver Cromwell and had his head cut off. Isn't that right?"

"Correct. These two men —"

"Goffe and Whalley?"

"Goffe and Whalley were commanders in the Roundhead army and they were two of the judges who condemned Charles to execution. After the Restoration, when the Royalists came into power again, the regicides —"

"The what?"

"Regicides — king killers — found it wise to disappear. Goffe and Whalley came to America and hid themselves in this remote village."

"Didn't we still belong to England then?"

"Yes; it was more than a hundred years before the Revolution."

"Why didn't they catch them and return them to England?"

"You forget that people running away had a better chance to escape then than now when the telegraph and telephone and wireless can outdistance any train or steamer. These men lived quietly in disguise here. One of them taught school. They told so little about themselves that people suspected that they had something to do with Cromwell's administration, but it was not until after they died that they were pretty well convinced of their identity."

"Most of the Massachusetts folk were more in sympathy with the Roundheads than the Royalists, I suppose, so they didn't press their search very hard," Mrs. Emerson suggested.

"I dare say that was the reason."

"And this was the house they lived in."

The girls looked earnestly at this house of a new interest, quite different from any other they had felt.

"It would be almost impossible for a man to hide like that in this twentieth century," decided Ethel Brown. "Even these men must have felt nervous

if ever a person recently from England happened into the village."

"There are stories that they had hiding places in the woods, and that when anybody who looked suspicious appeared they 'took to the woods,' literally, until the coast was clear again."

The next car bore the party to Amherst where they went over the grounds and surveyed the buildings with great interest.

"Very different from Harvard," commented Ethel Brown.

"I should think the boys would feel more at home, though," Ethel Blue decided. "It's a sort of pleasant, comfy place. You can see almost all of it at once and everybody must know everybody else."

"That's the trouble with big universities," nodded Mr. Emerson; "a boy can only get acquainted with a comparatively small group. It's like living in a large city or a small town."

"Me for a small town — just the size of Rosemont!" cried Dorothy, who had seen much of large towns and was glad to have a real home where she could bow to almost every one she met on the street.

"Deerfield," murmured Mrs. Emerson, as the car from the junction at Northampton went northward. "Why is that name familiar to me?"

"There's something in our history about Deerfield, I seem to remember," said Ethel Brown.

"I don't remember any history but I've heard something about a home industries association, that has been started here. I think the people at the Arts and Crafts Studios at Chautauqua told Mother about it last summer," said Dorothy.

"I never heard of that," replied Mr. Emerson,

" but I remember the history. During King Philip's War —"

" Who was he? " interrupted Mrs. Emerson.

" An Indian, chief of the Wampanoags. The war called by his name was in 1675. In September a band of 80 Englishmen called the *'Flower of Essex'* under Captain Lathrop was sent to Deerfield to save some grain that the inhabitants had had to abandon there. They were attacked by the Indians near a stream that has been called ever since 'Bloody Brook,' and only nine of the eighty escaped. I picked up this leaflet in Springfield last night to read you when we reached this stage of our journey."

" What is it? " asked the girls.

" A ballad by Edward Everett Hale. It's called 'The Lamentable Ballad of Bloody Brook.' "

" Come listen to the Story of brave Lathrop and his Men,—
How they fought, how they died,
When they marched against the Red Skins in the Autumn Days, and then
How they fell, in their pride,
By Pocumtuck Side.

" 'Who will go to Deerfield Meadows and bring the ripened Grain?'
Said old Mosely to his men in Array.
'Take the Wagons and the Horses and bring it back again;
But be sure that no Man stray
All the Day, on the Way.'

" Then the flower of Essex started, with Lathrop at their head,
Wise and brave, bold and true,

He had fought the Pequots long ago, and now to Mosely said,
'Be there many, be there few,
I will bring the Grain to you.'

"They gathered all the Harvest, and marched back on their Way,
Through the Woods which blazed like Fire.
No Soldier left the Line of march to wander or to stray,
Till the Wagons were stalled in the Mire,
And the Beasts began to tire.

"The Wagons have all forded the Brook as it flows,
And then the Rear-Guard stays
To pick the Purple Grapes that are hanging from the Boughs,
When, crack! — to their Amaze,
A hundred Firelocks blaze!

"Brave Lathrop, he lay dying, but as he fell he cried,
'Each Man to his Tree,' said he,
'Let no one yield an inch;' and so the soldier died;
And not a Man of all can see
Where the Foe can be.

"And Philip and his Devils pour in their Shot so fast,
From behind and before,
That Man after Man is shot down and breathes his last.
Every Man lies dead in his Gore
To fight no more,— no more!

"Oh, weep, ye Maids of Essex, for the Lads who have died,—
The Flower of Essex they!
The Bloody Brook still ripples by the black Mountain-side,
But never shall they come again to see the ocean-tide,
And never shall the Bridegroom return to his Bride,
From that dark and cruel Day,— cruel Day!"

"Oof, that does give you the shivers" shrugged Dorothy.

"The soldiers in this war to-day don't see their enemies either," commented Ethel Blue. "Now it's because the guns are fired from such a long distance, but the result is just the same as if the enemy was an Indian hiding behind a tree."

"If we really want to think peace instead of war we ought not to read poems like that," said Ethel Brown.

"Then I won't read you this other one about 'The Sack of Deerfield.' It's too long, anyway, to read before we get there, but you can read it for yourselves some time when you're not in a peaceful mood."

"Who wrote it?"

"Thomas Dunn English."

"The author of 'Ben Bolt'?"

"The same man. I'll tell you the story."

"When was Deerfield sacked?"

"On the last day of February, 1704. The Governor of Canada sent a force of 300 Frenchmen and Indians under a leader named de Rouville against the village. They reached it early in the morning and found it almost buried under snowdrifts with so hard a crust that they could walk on it. The sentinel had betrayed his trust by going to sleep, and the surprise of the village was complete. The man who is supposed to tell the tale relates that he saw his wife and children slain. He, himself, was bound, but saw a knife near him, cut his fetters and killed the savage who had slain his wife. The man's rush terrified the attackers who fled for a time, but were recalled by their leader, and the colonist was again

overcome and bound and destined for torture by fire. One house, defended by men who shot and women who moulded bullets for them, held out, and at sunrise de Rouville abandoned the attack and ordered a retreat. A helping party approached as the withdrawal began, but the French leader threatened to murder his prisoners if they tried to capture them, and they fought in vain. At night our prisoner was bound to an Indian, but while the savage slept he softly drew his captor's knife from his belt and killed him. Here's the last stanza; —

"Then I cut the cord that bound me, peered around me, rose uprightly,
Stepped as lightly as a lover on his blessed bridal day;
Swiftly, as my need inclined me, kept the bright North Star behind me,
And, ere dawning of the morning, I was twenty miles away."

"Ugh, I don't like that one either," declared Ethel Blue.

"It sounds more like murder than war, doesn't it?" commented Mr. Emerson. "That's what war really is, if we only saw it clearly. We're so accustomed to thinking of it as something glorious that we forget that it means the killing of man by his brother man."

"The man who is supposed to tell the story isn't very consistent," remarked Mrs. Emerson who had been looking over the poem as her husband told the tale; "he calls the man he was tied to a 'murder-tainted, loathsome Pagan,' and then he murdered him in his sleep."

"There always is a great difference between 'yours' and 'mine,'" replied Mr. Emerson dryly.

"The Americans forgot all their hatred for the French when the Revolution came and the French helped us against the British," said Ethel Brown.

"And we who were once English defeated the English in the Revolution and then in the War of 1812, and now there has been a hundred years of peace between the two countries. If it had not been for the Great War now going on there would have been much celebrating in 1915."

"We've been so soaked in war for the last few months it almost seems as if there never had been peace," sighed Mrs. Emerson.

"Is this the town where there was such killing?" demanded Ethel Blue in amazement as the car swept around a curve into the broad quiet street of the village of Deerfield. Huge trees stood before large wooden houses, that looked as ancient as they really were.

"It's certainly a town of calm now," said Mr. Emerson as he helped his party from the car.

They walked from one end of the street to the other, simply for the delight of absorbing the air of antiquity which they seemed to breathe in on the breeze. Then they went to the museum in Memorial Hall and examined the Indian relics and the collection of colonial household articles.

"I wonder we've never hunted arrow heads in Rosemont. Don't you suppose we might find some there?" Ethel Brown asked her grandfather.

"I don't doubt it at all. When we get home it might be worth your while to go to that field I'm having cleared on the north corner of the farm.

The trees there haven't been cut out for several generations, to judge by their size. The men are taking out the stumps now and when they turn over the earth I should be surprised if they didn't turn up some Indian relics."

"Let's go there the very day we get back!" exclaimed Ethel Blue. "I never thought about finding Indian things my own self. It always seemed as if they grew in cases in museums."

"If we find any we can start a museum of our own," proposed Dorothy.

They looked at the oldest house of all, the Old Tavern, which once sheltered Benedict Arnold. Inquiry about the home industries brought them to the house of a woman who told them the story of the movement that had resulted so happily for the people of the town.

"You see, our town is just *old*," she said emphatically. "We haven't any factories or anything but farms and memories, and this has brought us something to do that has interested us and is in keeping with the traditions of the place."

"I can well understand that all of you enjoy the work," said Mrs. Emerson, looking over the list of hand manufactures.

"We divide the work. Some of us have learned to do one thing well and some like another best, so whenever an order comes in it is filled by the person who can do it most easily."

"You're co-operative," remarked Mr. Emerson.

"We're neighbors and friends, and somehow we're better friends because we're having this work to do," she smiled.

"I wish we could get Mrs. Tsanoff up here," sighed Ethel Blue. "She loves the country and she likes to sew and when she's well she's strong. You don't want a Bulgarian man and his wife and two children, do you?" she asked, smiling.

Their hostess took her seriously.

"A Bulgarian?" she repeated. "That sounds rather warlike to country ears! I never saw a Bulgarian; I just read about them at the time of the Balkan War."

"This one is peaceful enough," encouraged Mr. Emerson, and he told her about Mrs. Tsanoff and her experience in America.

"Poor soul!" cried his listener. "She ought to be in the country. I wonder if you would mind telling my neighbor across the street about her. She and her husband have been wanting a man and his wife to work on the farm and help in the house. If they wouldn't be too lonely here where there are no people of their own kind," she ended questioningly.

"I rather imagine they'd be so glad to get into the country that they would learn English rather than stay in the city where they could occasionally hear Bulgarian."

Mr. Emerson went across the street and he was gone so long that the others were not surprised when he returned to tell them that there really was a chance for the Tsanoffs.

"I have promised to find out from Mr. Watkins all that I can about the husband, and to talk with Mrs. Tsanoff about coming here. I am to send these people photographs of the Tsanoffs and they are to send me photographs of the farm and house

to show the Tsanoffs so that they won't come here as blindly as when they came to America not knowing the very first thing about it."

"What a blessing it will be for them if we can just make the arrangement!" cried Ethel Blue, who was beginning to think a good deal about the future of the people whose care they had undertaken for the summer.

"Of course we didn't promise anything after the summer," she said to Ethel Brown and Dorothy as they waited for the car that was to carry them still farther north to Greenfield, "but it does seem such a shame for them to go back to live in the very way that made them sick."

"If the Tsanoffs can come here and we can arrange for Mrs. Paterno to work with that embroidery school in New York, that will be doing something lasting for two of them, anyway," responded her cousin, and they squeezed each others' hands joyfully over the prospect.

CHAPTER XV

THE BERKSHIRES AND BENNINGTON

GREENFIELD, where the party spent the night, they found to be a pleasant old town with the wide, tree-bordered streets to which they were growing accustomed in this trolleying pilgrimage. A quiet hotel sheltered them and they slept soundly, their dreams filled with memories of colleges and rose gardens and Indians in romantic confusion. The next day they started westward.

"If we want to stay long in Massachusetts we have to go either east or west," laughed Mr. Emerson; "we've just about used up our chances for going farther north and still keeping within the state."

To reach North Adams they were forced to take a train for a few miles. They were the more willing to forego the pleasure of trolleying for an hour or two because the train took them through the Hoosac Tunnel.

"When the Hoosac Tunnel was opened forty years ago, it was thought a wonderful piece of engineering," said Mr. Emerson.

"How long is it?" asked Dorothy.

"Not quite five miles."

"What does it tunnel?"

"It goes through Hoosac Mountain. That is one of the Green Mountains. They run down through Vermont and taper off in western Massachusetts in the Berkshire Hills, which are really two

ranges of low mountains, the Taconic and the Hoosac. We're going to see something of them to-day."

"Massachusetts has such a lot to see packed in such a small space," declared Ethel Brown as they came out of the smoky darkness of the tunnel and soon found themselves in the bustling town of North Adams. There they found a trolley waiting to take them southward and they bowled along with Greylock, a mountain of considerable size, stretching its length against the western sky.

"Would you like to stop and make the ascent?" Mr. Emerson inquired.

The Ethels would have liked nothing better, and Dorothy flushed with pleasure at the proposition, but they saw that Mrs. Emerson was not favorably inclined to the idea so they laid it aside in their memories for fulfilment at some other time.

The street car company had erected signs at points of interest along the way and the passengers read them attentively. Scraps of information about the Revolution, about well-known men who had some connection with the locality, or about the geography or the industries of the section were given them from these wayside readers. A little guidebook added to the fund of knowledge.

"The guide says that Josh Billings was born at Lanesborough to the west of where we are now," read Ethel Brown. "Who was he?"

Mr. Emerson smiled at his wife.

"This is a new generation that does not know who Josh Billings was!" he exclaimed. "Josh Billings was the pen name which a man named Shaw signed to his articles. He was a funny man and all America

laughed at him and his spelling. Every year he published an almanac — 'Josh Billings Almanix,' that the farmers used to rely on for their jokes when they sat around the stove of the country store."

"Another product of this part of the world seems to be cheese," remarked Mrs. Emerson as the car whirled through a clean village which lost no chance of letting the wayfarer know what its chief occupation was. "I suppose it is called 'Cheshire' because Cheshire in England is famous for its cheeses."

Pittsfield they found to be a large town whose old houses surrounded by ancient trees gave a feeling of solidity and comfort.

"Longfellow wrote 'The Old Clock on the Stairs' here," said Mr. Emerson pointing out the Appleton house. "The first stanza describes more than one of the old mansions," and he recited: —

> "Somewhat back from the village street
> Stands the old-fashioned country seat.
> Across its antique portico
> Tall poplar-trees their shadows throw,
> And from its station in the hall
> An ancient timepiece says to all,—
> 'Forever — never!
> Never — forever!'"

"I remember that poem, but I never liked it much;" acknowledged Dorothy; "it's too gloomy."

"It is rather solemn," admitted Mr. Emerson. "You'll be interested to know that merry Dr. Holmes used to come to Pittsfield in the summer. There are many associations with him in the town."

"I'm sure he wrote gayer poems than 'The Old Clock on the Stairs' when he was here."

"Is this a very old town?" Ethel Blue asked.

"It was settled in 1743. Does that seem old to you?"

"1743," Ethel repeated, doing some subtraction by the aid of her fingers, for arithmetic was not her strong point. "A hundred and seventy-two years," she decided after reflection. "Yes, that seems pretty old to me. It's a lot older than Rosemont but over a hundred years younger than Plymouth or Boston."

"A sort of middle age," Mr. Emerson summed up her decision with a smile.

After luncheon at the hotel an early afternoon car sped on with them to a station whence they took an automobile for a drive through Stockbridge and Lenox with their handsome estates and lovely views.

The trolley whizzed them back over the same route to North Adams and westward to Williamstown.

"One of my brothers — your great-uncle James, Ethel Brown — went to Williams College," said Mr. Emerson, "and I shall be glad to spend the night here and see the town and the buildings I heard him talk so much about."

"Why don't we get out, then?"

"We're going now to Bennington, Vermont."

"Vermont! Into another state!" exclaimed Ethel Blue.

"When we come back we'll leave the car here."

"Are those the Green Mountains?" asked Dorothy as the trolley ran into a smoother country than they had been in while traveling in the Berkshires, but one which showed a background of long wooded ranges rising length after length against the sky.

"Those are the Green Mountains; and this is the 'Green Mountain State,' and the men who fought in the Revolution under Ethan Allen were the 'Green Mountain Boys.'"

"But, ranged in serried order, attent on sterner noise,
Stood stalwart Ethan Allen and his 'Green Mountain Boys'
Two hundred patriots listening as with the ears of one,
To the echo of the muskets that blazed at Lexington!"

quoted Mrs. Emerson. "They were bound northward to the British fort at Ticonderoga."

"Did they get there?"

"They took the British completely by surprise. That was in May, 1775. It was in August, two years later that the battle of Bennington took place."

"Here? In this peaceful little town that we're riding into?"

"Right here. A British general was coming south from Canada to Albany. He ran out of supplies, so he sent some men over to Bennington where they had found out that the Americans had collected some supplies. The leader of the Continentals was John Stark."

"Let me read Rodman's poem to the girls, Mother," begged Mr. Emerson. "That tells the tale pretty well. There are two things about this battle that no one ever forgets," he went on as he searched in his bag for the book that contained the verses. "One is that Stark's wife was named Molly, and the other that a parson who lived in Pittsfield drove all the way to the Bennington battle in a chaise and preached a sermon to the British when a lull came in the firing, punctuating his remarks with

an occasional shot when he thought a regular was aiming at him. Here's the book."

"How do you happen to be carrying Rodman's poems around with you?" demanded Mrs. Emerson, smiling.

"Haven't you noticed what a lot I knew about the places we've been through and all the history connected with them? I went into a book-store in Boston when the idea popped into my head that we might come back this way, and the clerk fixed up a small but sufficient package for me."

They all laughed at his confession, and Ethel Blue thanked him for having so much forethought.

"Here's what brother Rodman says. I'm not going to read the whole ballad; it's too long; but I'll read enough for you to get an idea of the temper of the men and of what happened."

They had walked to the outskirts of the village and settled themselves comfortably where they could see the town in the distance and yet feel far enough away to be able to imagine that it was but a small part of its present size. Mr. Emerson opened his book.

> "Up through a cloudy sky, the sun
> Was buffeting his way,
> On such a morn as ushers in
> A sultry August day.
> Hot was the air — and hotter yet
> Men's thoughts within them grew:
> They Britons, Hessians, Tories saw —
> They saw their homesteads too."

"Just as we can, through the trees," murmured Dorothy.

"Their leader was a brave old man,
A man of earnest will:
His very presence was a host —
He'd fought at Bunker Hill.
A living monument he stood
Of stirring deeds of fame,
Of deeds that shed a fadeless light
On his own deathless name.

Of Charlestown's flame, of Warren's blood,
His presence told the tale,
It made each hero's heart beat high
Though lip and cheek grew pale;
It spoke of Princeton, Morristown,
Told Trenton's thrilling story —
It lit futurity with hope,
And on the past shed glory."

"Trenton and Princeton — those are the battles that three-or-four-times-great-grandfather John Emerson wrote about in the big Bible when he was telling the tale of Patience and Algernon Merriam," Ethel Brown recalled.

"The very same," agreed her grandfather, resuming his reading.

"Who were those men — their leader who?
Where stood they on that morn?
The men were Berkshire yeomanry,
Brave men as e'er were born,—
Who in the reaper's merry row
Or warrior rank could stand.
Right worthy such a noble troop,
John Stark led on the band.

"There was a Berkshire parson — he
And all his flock were there,

And like true churchmen militant
The arm of flesh made bare.
Out spake the Dominie and said,
'For battle have we come
These many times and after this
We mean to stay at home.'

"The morning came — there stood the foe,
Stark eyed them as they stood —
Few words he spake —'twas not a time
For moralizing mood.
'See there the enemy, my boys!
Now strong in valor's might,
Beat them, or Molly Stark will sleep
In widowhood to-night.'

"Brief eloquence was Stark's — nor vain —
Scarce uttered he the words,
When burst the musket's rattling peal
Out-leap'd the flashing swords;
And when brave Stark in after time
Told the proud tale of wonder,
He said the battle din was one
Continual clap of thunder.

"Two hours they strove — then victory crowned
The gallant Yankee boys.
Nought but the memory of the dead
Bedimm'd their glorious joys;
Ay — there's the rub — the hour of strife,
Though follow years of fame,
Is still in mournful memory link'd
With some death-hallow'd name."

"All the poems end the same way," observed Ethel Blue. "They get you all excited about a battle and then they say that peace is better, or that you must think of the sad side, too."

"That's because everybody feels way down in his heart that war is awful," said Dorothy slowly. "You feel patriotic and it all seems glorious, but when you come to think of it it would have been a lot better if there hadn't been any quarrel or if the quarrel had been settled without fighting."

"That's why so many people favor arbitration of international quarrels," said Mr. Emerson.

"Arbitration? What's that?"

"Talking it over; trying to settle it without fighting."

"The way Ethel Brown and I do when we want to do something different and we both give way and agree on something else."

"We'd better agree to have dinner or supper here if we don't want to get back to Williamstown after all the food in the place has been eaten by those hungry college boys," suggested Mrs. Emerson.

Mr. Emerson took a hasty glance at the setting sun.

"You never spoke a truer word, my dear," applauded her husband, "though this is vacation and the boys won't be there! Still, I'm as hungry as a bear. Let's have our evening meal, whatever it proves to be, in Bennington."

They were all hungry enough to think the plan one of the best that their leader had offered for some time, so it was only after what turned out to be supper that they went back to Williamstown.

In the moonlight the towers of the college buildings glimmered mysteriously through the trees, and the girls went to bed happy in the promise of what the morning was going to bring them.

Ethel Brown was sorry that there were no stu-

dents to be seen on the grounds when they wandered about the next morning, for she would have liked to see what sort of boys they were, and, if she liked their looks, have suggested to Tom or James that they come here to college amid such lovely surroundings. She liked it better than Amherst but Ethel Blue preferred that compact little village, and Dorothy clung to her deep-seated affection for Cambridge.

"After all, our Club boys have their plans all made so we don't need to get excited over these colleges," decided Ethel Brown; "and I'm glad they're all going to different ones because when they graduate we'll have invitations to three separate class-days and other festivities."

"What a perfectly beautiful tower," exclaimed Dorothy.

"It's the chapel. That light-colored stone is superb, isn't it!"

"Some of these other buildings look as old as some of the oldy-old Harvard ones."

"They can't be anywhere near as old. This college wasn't founded until 1793."

"That's old enough to give it a settled-down air in spite of these handsome new affairs. There must be lovely walks about here."

"Hills almost as big as mountains to climb. But the boys don't have any girls to call on the way the Amherst boys do, with the Smith girls and the Mt. Holyoke girls just a little ride away."

"Perhaps they'd rather have mountains," remarked Ethel Brown wisely.

As the college was not in session Mr. Emerson was not able to see any of the records that he had

hoped to look over to search for his brother's name, and as almost all of the professors were out of town, he could not question any of the older men of the place as to their recollection of him. He was quite willing, therefore, to take a comparatively early train for Albany.

They arrived early enough to go over the Capitol, seated at the head of a broad but precipitous street. It was very unlike the stern simplicity of the Massachusetts State House, but they amused themselves by saying that at least the two buildings had one part of their decoration in common. In Albany the tops of the columns were carved with fruits and flowers, all to be found in the United States. In Boston a local product, the codfish, held a position of honor over the desk of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

"All made in the U. S. A.," laughed Dorothy, quoting a slogan of the wartime, intended to help home industries.

They wanted to see the Cathedral and St. Agnes' School as well as the State Board of Education Building, and after they had hunted them out with the help of a map of the city, and had taken a trolley ride into the suburbs, and had eaten a hearty dinner they were glad to go to bed early so as to be up betimes to catch the Day Boat for New York.

"What splendid weather we've had," exclaimed Mrs. Emerson as they took their places on the broad deck of the handsome craft. It was not the same one that had taken them to West Point at the end of May. This one was named after Hendrik Hudson, the explorer of the river. They found it to be quite as comfortable as the other, and the day went fast

as they swept down the stream with the current to aid them.

Occasionally broad reaches of the river grew narrower and wider again as the soil had proven soft or more resistant and the water had spread or had cut out a deep channel. Off to the west the Catskills loomed against the sky, more varied than the Green Mountains and more rugged.

"More beautiful, too, I think," decided Ethel Blue. "I like their roughness."

A storm came up as they passed the mountains and the thunder rumbled unendingly among the hills.

"Listen to the Dutchmen that Rip Van Winkle saw playing bowls when he visited them during his twenty years' nap," laughed Ethel Brown who was a reader of Washington Irving's "Sketch Book."

"I don't wonder he felt dozy in summer with such a lovely scene to quiet him," Mrs. Emerson said in his defence. "I feel a trifle sleepy myself," and she leaned back in her chair and closed her eyes with an appearance of extreme comfort.

They passed Kingston which was burned by the British just two months after the battle of Bennington; and by a large town which proved to be Poughkeepsie.

"Here's where we should land if we were going to finish our investigation of colleges by seeing Vassar," said Mr. Emerson.

"I'm glad we aren't going to get off!" exclaimed Ethel Brown. "I'm so undecided now I don't see how I'll ever make up my mind where to go!"

"Something will happen to help you decide," consoled Dorothy. "Isn't this where the big college boat races are rowed?" she asked Mr. Emerson.

"Right here on this broad stretch of water. A train of observation cars — flat cars — follows the boats along the bank. I must bring the Club up here to some of them some time."

"O-oh!" all the girls cried with one voice, and they stared at the river and the shore as if they might even then see the shells dashing down the stream and the shouting crowds in the steamers and on the banks.

Below Newburgh the river narrowed beneath upstanding cliffs and a point jutted out into the water.

"Do you recognize that piece of land?" Mr. Emerson asked.

No one did.

"You don't recall West Point?"

"We're in the position now of the steamers and tugs we watched while we were having our dinner at the hotel. Do you see the veranda of the hotel? Up on the headland?"

They did, and they felt that they were in truth nearing home. The remainder of the way was over familiar waters, and they called to mind the historic tales that Roger and Mr. Emerson had told them on the Memorial Day trip.

"We've seen so much history in the last week, though," declared Ethel Blue, "that I don't believe I can ever realize that I'm living in the twentieth century!"

CHAPTER XVI

HUNTING ARROW HEADS

THE week after the home-coming from the Massachusetts trolley trip was a time of busyness for the Ethels and Dorothy. Helen and Roger and the grown-ups who had stayed at home had to be made familiar with every step of the way, and the whole long history lesson that they had had was reviewed especially for Helen's benefit. She looked up battle after battle in large histories in the library and was so full of questions as to how this place and that looked that the girls regretted that they had not taken a kodak so that they might have gratified her curiosity by showing her pictures of all the historical spots in their modern garb.

Affairs at Rose House had to be brought up to date. Mr. Emerson undertook the management of Mrs. Tsanoff's affairs and went into town the very day after his return to call on Mr. Watkins and find out where Tsanoff was working. He found that he had been discharged from his position but a few days before. He had become so downcast as a consequence that he had not sent word to his wife of this fresh disappointment, and he was unspeakably grateful to Mr. Emerson for the chance that he opened to him. A kodak of his dark, sensible face was easily obtained to send to Massachusetts and Mr. Emerson went home feeling that the first step had been well taken.

Making Mrs. Tsanoff understand the new proposition was not easy, but Mrs. Schuler and Moya had learned something of her language as she had learned more English during the summer and, when Mr. Emerson showed her a photograph of the Deerfield farm and told her of its advantages for her husband and the children she was eager to go to it at once.

" The fields, the cows," she kept saying over and over again, and the girls realized how strong within her was her love for the country for which she had made the poor exchange of the city, and they sympathized keenly.

The result of the correspondence between Mr. Emerson and the Deerfield people was that the Bulgarians were put on the train for Springfield within ten days, each one of them, even the twin babies, wearing a small American flag so that they might be recognized by their new employer who was to meet them at Springfield and convoy them home. Mrs. Tsanoff left Rose House in tears, kissing the hands of all the girls and murmuring her gratitude to all of them over and over again as she wept and smiled by turns.

The other women had started the embroidery class, teaching each other and Mrs. Morton, Mrs. Smith and the Miss Clarks. The plan was working out very well, Mrs. Schuler thought, especially with Mrs. Paterno, who evidently loved the work and in it was already losing something of her fear and anxiety.

Roger had made a sideboard for the Rose House dining room assisted by the members of the Club who were " not off gallivanting," as he expressed it.

"It's mighty good looking," commented Dorothy as she examined it. "Was it hard to make? It looks so."

"No worse than that seat we made for Mrs. Schuler's room. We made two cupboard arrangements for the ends just like those, only we put a door over each one of them. Instead of a big box between them to be used as a seat we put a shelf resting on the cleats that went across the backs of the book-

shelves. Then we connected the two cupboards with a long plank."

"You put a back behind the shelf."

"We put on thin boards for a back, but we haven't decided yet whether we made a mistake in putting doors in front or not. I like them with doors the way we have it, but Margaret thinks it would have been rather good without any doors. What do you think?"

"I think Mrs. Schuler will like it better with doors. The linen or whatever she keeps in there will be cleaner if it isn't exposed to the air on open shelves and the doors will serve as a protection against dust."

They all agreed that it was one of the best pieces of furniture that they had yet made for the house, and the travellers were sorry that they had not had a hand in its construction on account of the experience the progress of the work would have afforded them.

A few days later the Ethels planned an excursion for the benefit of the younger children which was to be somewhat in the nature of a picnic, but it was arranged to have everyone attend who could do so.

There was intense excitement among the smaller children when the announcement was made that the picnic would be held early the following week, providing the weather proved clear enough not to interfere with their plans.

Indian Arrowheads.

Dicky's share in the excitement of the journey was the stirring up of a deep interest in Indians. When the Ethels told him that they were going over to the field that Grandfather Emerson was having cleared he insisted on going with them to hunt for arrow heads. They waited until a day after a rain had left the small stones washed free of earth, and they made an afternoon of it, all the Club and all the Rose

House women and children going too. The boys carried hampers with the wherewithal for afternoon tea, and the expedition assumed serious proportions in the minds of those arranging it when Dicky asked if they would need one of Grandfather's wagons to bring home the arrow heads in.

As a matter of fact they did not find many arrow heads. Whether the earth had not yet been turned over to a sufficient depth or whether the Indians who had lived about Rosemont had been of a peaceful temper or whether the field happened not to be near any of their villages, no one knew, though every one made one guess or another.

They planned the search methodically.

"I saw a lot of Boy Scouts one day clear up the field in Central Park in which they had been drilling," said Tom Watkins. "They stretched in a long line across the whole field and then they walked slowly along looking for anything that might have been dropped in the course of their evolutions."

"Did they find much?"

"You'd be surprised to know how much!"

"Let's do the same thing here. If we stretch across the field then every one is responsible for just a small section under his eyes —"

"— and feet."

"— and feet. I wish we had an arrow head to show the women so they'd know exactly what to look for."

"Father had one in the cabinet," said Roger, "and I put it in my pocket for just this purpose. I don't know where he got it, and it may not be of exactly the kind of stone these New Jersey Indians used, but it will show the shape all right."

"They always used flint, didn't they?" asked Margaret.

"Flint or obsidian or the hardest stone they could find, whatever it was."

"Bone?"

"Sometimes. I saw quite large bone heads at the Natural History Museum."

"I've seen life-size boneheads frequently," announced James solemnly, not smiling until Roger and Tom pelted him with bits of sod.

The arrow head was passed from hand to hand and every one studied it carefully. Then they stretched across the field and began their search. The result was not very satisfactory from Dicky's point of view, for he concluded that he need not have worried as to how the load was to be carried home. There were only seven found. Of these, however, Dicky found two, one by his unaided efforts and the other through Ethel Blue's taking pains not to see one that lay between him and her. Nobody else found more than one and several of them found none at all, so Dicky, after all, was hilarious.

In a corner of the field they built a fire and heated water for the tea in a kettle thrust among the coals. Ears of corn still in the husk were roasted between heated stones, bits of bacon sizzled appetizingly from forked sticks and dripped on to the flames with a hissing sound, and biscuits, fresh from Moya's oven, were reheated near the blaze.

It was while they were sitting around the fire that Dicky's mind turned to the remainder of the Indian's equipment.

"What did he do with thith arrow head?" he inquired.

"He tied it on to the end of an arrow, and shot bears with it."

"What 'th an arrow?"

"A long, slender stick."

"Do you throw it?"

"You shoot it from a bow."

"What 'th a bow?"

"A curved piece of wood with a string connecting the ends."

"How doeth it work?"

Roger heaved a sigh and then gave it up.

"Me for the bushes," he cried. "Language fails me; I'll have to make a bow and arrow."

"It's the easiest way," nodded Tom. "Bring me a switch and I'll make the arrow while you make the bow."

"Who's got a piece of string?" inquired Roger a few minutes later as he held up his handiwork for the admiration of his friends.

James produced the necessary string and Roger strung the bow.

"Now, then, let's see what it will do," he said.

Adjusting the arrow he drew the cord and sent the simple shaft whizzing through the air against a tree where it stuck in the bark for an instant before it fell to the ground.

"Do you think it's safe for Dicky to have an arrow as sharp as that?" inquired Helen.

"That's not sharp enough to do any damage. It didn't hold in the tree."

Dicky was delighted with his new toy and went off to test its power, followed by Elisabeth of Belgium, Sheila, Luigi and Pietro Paterno, Olga Peterson and Vasili and Vladimir Vereshchagin. The

romper-clad band stirred the amused smiles of the elders watching them.

" They certainly are the cunningest little dinks that ever happened!" cried Ethel Brown, establishing herself comfortably to help make small bows and arrows for the rest of the flock.

The girls as well as the boys of the United Service Club knew how to use a jacknife and the diminutive weapons of the chase were soon ready.

The Ethels were hunting through the luncheon basket for string when a howl from the other side of the field made them drop what was in their hands and rush toward the trees where the children were playing. The mothers followed them, Mrs. Paterno and Mrs. Vereshchagin in the lead.

" I certainly hope it's not the little Paterno," said Ethel Blue breathlessly to Ethel Brown as they ran. " Mrs. Paterno never will forgive Dicky if he's got him into trouble again."

They concluded when they came in sight of the group of children that the Italian woman had run from nervousness and the Russian because she recognized the voice of her offspring, for it was Vladimir whose yells were resounding through the air. Dicky was bending over him and the other children were standing around so that the runners as they approached could not see what was the matter.

Mrs. Vereshchagin increased her speed, uttering sounds that fell strangely on her listeners' ears. The group of children fell away as their elders came near, and the Ethels, who were in front, saw that Vladimir was pinned to a tree by Dicky's arrow which had pierced the fullness of his rompers. He could not be hurt in the least, but the strangeness

of his position had startled and angered him and was causing the shrieks that had frightened them all.

Fortunately for Dicky, Mrs. Vereshchagin, unlike Mrs. Paterno, had a sense of humor, and as soon as she saw that her child was neither injured nor in danger she burst into laughter as loud as his cries of rage and terror. Roger quickly unfastened him from the tree to which he was bound and handed him over to his mother, none the worse for his experience except that his rompers were torn. Turning to Dicky, Roger decreed that the head must be taken from his arrow.

"It's not your fault, old man," he said; "but Helen was right — this thing is too sharp."

"I'll tell you what to do, Roger, get some of those rubber tips that slip on the ends of lead pencils. The English stationer must have some. If you put them on all these arrows they can't do any harm."

"Meanwhile the kiddies had better not have them," Mrs. Schuler decided, so they were put aside with the basket, to be finished later when the needed tips should be procured in Rosemont.

"You got off pretty well, that time, sir," laughed Roger. "What were you trying to do?"

"I wath an Indian thooting bearth. Vladimir wath a bear."

"A Russian bear. You got him all right; but let me tell you, young man; you must be mighty careful what you aim at, for international complications may follow."

"What 'th that?"

"That means it's dangerous to aim at *anybody*. I'll make you a target and when you get so you can

hit the bull's eye three times out of five at a distance of fifteen feet I'll give you a better bow. Is it a bargain?"

Dicky shook hands on it solemnly.

"Remember now, no shooting at any living thing."

"Not a cat?"

"Not a cat or a bird, a dog or any other animal on two legs or four."

"All right," nodded Dicky, and Roger knew that he would keep his word, for that is a part of the training of a soldier's son.

The experiences of the afternoon were not yet ended. The arrow episode over the children looked about for other amusement. They drifted away from the group still gathered about the embers of the dying fire and made their way among the bushes standing uncut on the edge of the new clearing. Once in a while their laughter was borne on the breeze. It was a long time before any one thought of seeing what they were doing. Then Ethel Brown rose and sauntered in the direction whence the sounds came.

"With Dicky in the lead," she thought, "it's just as well to keep an eye on them."

As she approached the woods she saw the little army of rompered youngsters, each armed with a switch, and each doing his best to strike something high over his head. They all stood with their eager faces looking upward and their arms working busily with what muscle the summer had given them. Leaves were falling from the bushes and the lower branches of the saplings that were struck by their rods, and it was evident that they were causing great

destruction to the foliage, whatever the real object of their attack.

Ethel's wonderment increased.

"Children do get the greatest amount of fun out of the smallest things," she thought. "What *can* they be doing?"

When quite near the thicket, however, her slow steps quickened into a run. Her sharp eyes discovered hanging from one of the trees over the heads of the children one of the large wasps' nests which seem to be made of gray paper. It had caught Dicky's attention and he had coveted it for purpose of investigation. Summoning his cohorts he had pointed it out to them and had urged them to bring it down. Each one had broken a stick; some had stripped off the leaves entirely; others had left a tuft at the end. In both cases the weapons looked dangerously destructive to Ethel, as she ran toward them and saw one pole after another swish past the home of the paper wasps and expected the colony to rush forth to defend their abode. With a cry of warning she bore down on them and with a sweep of her arms turned them all back into the open field. Dicky was indignant.

"What you doing that for?" he demanded angrily. "One more thwat and I'd a had it."

"You don't know what it is," cried Ethel breathlessly. "You'd all be stung if there were any wasps at home. That's their house and they get awfully mad."

The children looked back fearfully at the object of their attack.

"You've had a narrow escape," insisted Ethel, and then to divert their minds from what had hap-

pened she made them stretch themselves in a line and hunt for arrow heads all the way back to their mothers.

"Thith ith a funny thtone," exclaimed Dicky, picking up a rather large oblong stone that had a groove all around its middle.

"It looks like Lake Chautauqua, doesn't it? You know they say that 'Chautauqua' means 'the bag tied in the middle.'"

"Did the Indianth uthe it?" Dicky asked as he laid his trophy in Roger's hand.

"I rather think they did," returned Roger excitedly. "It looks to me as if this was a hammer or a hatchet. See —" and he held it out for the girls and James and Tom to see, "they must have lashed this head on to a stout stick by a cord tied where this crease is."

"It would make a first-rate hammer," commended James.

"The Indians didn't manufacture as many of these as they did arrow heads, because, of course, they didn't need as many. I rather guess you've made the big find of the afternoon," and Dicky swelled with pride as his brother patted him on the shoulder.

When it became time to go home the Ethels offered to take the short cut to Rosemont and get the rubber tips for the children's arrows.

"If we go across the field and the West Woods we come out not far from the stationer's, and we can leave the tips up at Rose House on the way back so they'll be ready for you to put on to-morrow and the youngsters can have the bows and arrows to play with right off."

"Let me go," begged Dicky.

"All right," agreed Roger. "Be careful when you go over the railroad track, girls. Mother isn't very keen on having Dicky learn that road, you know."

They promised to be careful and set forth in the opposite direction from the rest of the party whom they left putting together the remnants of the feast and packing away the plates.

It was an interesting walk. They played Indian all the way. Ethel Blue's imagination had been greatly stimulated by the tale of the attack on Deerfield and she pretended to see an Indian behind every tree. Ethel Brown pretended to shoot them all with unerring arrow, and Dicky charged the bushes in handsome style and routed the enemy with awful slaughter.

"This is just the kind of game we ought not to play if we want to make Dicky think of peace and not of war," declared Ethel Blue at last when she had become breathless from the excitement of their countless adventures.

"That's so. It's funny how you forget. It's just as Della says — we don't realize how fighting and soldiers and thinking about military things is put into our minds even in games when we're little."

"I'm really sorry we've done this," confessed Ethel Brown as they fell behind their charge. "Dicky's 'pretending' works over time anyway, and he may dream about Indians, or get scared to go to bed, and it will be our fault."

"It's rather late to think about it — but let's try not to do it again. Isn't there something we can call his attention to now to take his mind off Indians?"

Dicky was marching ahead of them drawing an imaginary bow and bringing down a large bag of imaginary birds, while from the difficulty with which he occasionally dragged an imaginary something behind him it seemed that he had at least slain an imaginary deer.

Naturally, with his hunting blood up, the Ethels found him not responsive to appeals to "see what a pretty flower this is" or to examine the hole of a chipmunk. He was after more thrilling adventures. Still, by the time they reached the railroad track, everyday matters were beginning to command his attention. This short cut across the track was one that he had seldom been allowed to take, and the mere fact of doing it was exciting. He stopped in the middle and looked up and down the line while the girls tugged at him. It was only when he saw a bit or two of shining metal which, according to his arrow head game of the afternoon, he picked up and tucked away in the pocket of his rompers, that his attention was once more turned to the gathering of the wonders that seemed to be under his feet all the time if only he looked for them hard enough.

The errand to the stationery shop was successful. The stationer said that most pencils now were made with erasers built into them, but that he thought he had a box of old tips left over. He hunted for them very obligingly, and set so small a price on them that the Ethels took the whole box so that they might have a liberal supply in case any were lost off the arrow heads. Dicky put one in his pocket so that he could place it on his arrow as soon as he got it into his hands once more, and he begged the Ethels to go

home by way of Rose House so that he could fix it up that very night.

"Is it early enough?" asked Ethel Blue.

Ethel Brown thought it was.

"But we'll have to hurry," she warned; "there's an awfully black cloud over there. It looks like a thunder storm."

They scampered as fast as their legs would carry them and reached the farm in the increasing darkness, but before any rain had fallen. They found all the bows and arrows standing in a trash basket which Roger had made for the dining room.

"Mr. Roger stood them up in that so the children wouldn't be apt to touch 'em," explained Moya.

Dicky sat down on the hearth and set to work on the arrow which he recognized as his because of its greater length.

"You'll have to hurry or we'll get caught," warned his sister.

"We ought to start right off," urged Ethel Blue. "We'll have to run for it even if we go now."

Mrs. Schuler brought in the cape of her storm coat.

"Take this for Dicky," she said. "If it does break before you get home it will rain hard and his rompers won't be any protection at all."

"Put it on now, Dicky," commanded Ethel Brown. "Stand up."

Dicky rose reluctantly.

"Why do you fill up your pocket with such stuff," inquired Ethel impatiently. "There, throw it into the fireplace — gravel, toadstools, old brass," she catalogued contemptuously, and Dicky, swept on by

her eagerness, obediently cast his treasures among the soft pine boughs that filled the wide, old fireplace.

"I'll clear them way," promised Mrs. Schuler. "Hurry," and she fairly turned them out of the house.

"You made me throw away my shiny things," complained Dicky as they ran down the lane as fast as they could go.

"Never mind; you'd have jounced them out of your pocket anyway, running like this," and Dicky, taking giant strides as his sister and his cousin held a hand on each side, was inclined to think that he would be lucky if he were not jounced out of his clothes before he got home.

CHAPTER XVII

THE STORM

AFTER all, they need not have jerked poor Dicky over the ground at such a rapid pace for the storm, though it grumbled and roared at a distance, did not break until a late hour in the night. Then it came with a vengeance and made up for its indecision by behaving with real ferocity.

To the women at Rose House, accustomed to the city, where Nature's sights and sounds are deadened by the number of the buildings and the narrowness of the streets, the uproar was terrifying. Flash after flash lit up their rooms so that the roosters and puppies and pigs and cows on the curtains stood out clearly in the white light. Crash after crash sent them cowering under the covers of their beds. The children woke and added their cries to the tumult.

As the electric storm swept away into the distance the wind rose and howled about the house. Shutters slammed; chairs were over-turned on the porch; a brick fell with a thud from the top of the chimney to the roof; another fell down the chimney into the fireplace where its arrival was followed by a roar that seemed to shake the old building on its foundation.

"Grrreat Scott!" ejaculated Mr. Schuler, who had learned some English expressions from his pupils. He was returning through the hall from a hobbling excursion to make sure that all the win-

dows down stairs were closed. The candle dropped from his hand and he was left in the dark. His crutch slid from under his arm, and he was forced to cling to a table for support and call for his wife to come and find it for him.

Mrs. Schuler reached him from the kitchen where she had been attending to the fastenings of the back door. Fortunately her light had survived the gusty attack and she was able to help her husband to his prop.

"What is it?" she cried breathlessly. "Is the house falling? Did you ever hear such a noise!"

Mr. Schuler never had. The outcry upstairs was increased by the shrieks of Sheila who had slept until the last shock and who woke at last to add her penetrating voice to the pandemonium.

"Do you smell something queer?" asked Mrs. Schuler. "Do you think that was a lightning-bolt and it set the house on fire?"

Her husband shook his head doubtfully.

"The lightning has gone by," he said, but they went together on a tour of investigation.

Nothing was burning in the kitchen, but the rays of the uplifted candle showed a zigzag crack on the wall behind the stove.

"That wall is the chimney," said Mrs. Schuler. "Something has happened to the chimney."

"Let's go into the dining-room and see if anything shows there."

Into the dining-room they went. An acrid smell filled the room, and as they entered a smouldering flame in the fireplace burst into a blaze, from the draught of the door. Its fuel consisted only of some trash that had been tossed into the fireplace and hid-

den behind the fresh pine boughs that filled the opening through the summer. The drinking water in the pitcher on the table was enough to put an end to it.

"It's hardly large enough to bother to put out," exclaimed Mr. Schuler, "if it weren't that the chimney seems to be so shaken that the flames might work through somewhere and set fire to the woodwork."

"There's no doubt about something serious having happened to the chimney," and Mrs. Schuler stooped and pushed back three or four bricks that had tumbled forward on to the hearth.

"The back is cracked," she announced from her knees. "With that big crack on the kitchen side I rather think Moya had better use the oil stove until Mr. Emerson can send a bricklayer to examine the chimney."

"Everything but this seems all right here; you'd better go up and try to calm the women," advised Mr. Schuler.

The wind storm was dying down and the inmates of Rose House were becoming quieter as the din outside moderated. The Matron went from room to room bringing comfort and courage as her candle shone upon one frightened face after another.

"It's all over; there's nothing to be afraid of," she said over and over again. Only to Moya did she tell what had happened to the chimney, so that she might prepare breakfast on the oil stove.

"It almost seems I heard a giant fall down the chimney," the Irish girl whispered hoarsely.

"I dare say you did hear the bricks falling. There's a gallon or two of soot in the dining-room fireplace for you to clean up in the morning."

"'Tis easy, that, compared wid cleaning up the whole house that seemed like to tumble!" said Moya with a sigh of relief.

The children were already asleep and the remainder of the night was unbroken by any sound save the dripping of the raindrops from the branches and the swish of wet leaves against each other when a light breeze revived their former activities.

Little Vladimir was up early with a memory of something queer having happened in the night. He was eager to go down stairs and find out what it was all about and his mother dressed him and let him out of her room and then turned over to take another nap. When Moya went down to set the oil stove in position for use he was amusing himself contentedly with the rubbish in the fireplace, his face and hands already in need of renewed attention from his mother.

"'Tis the sooty-faced young one ye are," she called to him good-naturedly. "Run up to the brook and wash yerself an' save yer mother the throuble."

She opened the back door and he ran out into the yard, but instead of going up the lane to the brook he scampered round the house and down the lane. Moya called after him but he paid no attention.

"Sure, I've too much to do to be day-nursing that young Russian," she murmured.

There were wonderings and ejaculations in many tongues when all the women and children came down and examined the cracks in the kitchen side of the chimney and in the back of the dining-room fireplace and saw the heap of rubbish and bricks piled up in the fireplace. It gave them something to talk about

all the morning. This was lucky, for the grass was too wet for the children to play on it, and when mothers and children were crowded on the veranda idle words sometimes changed to cross ones.

" 'Tis strange; they's good women, iv'ry wan, take 'em alone," Moya had said one day to Mrs. Schuler and Ethel Blue when they heard from the kitchen the sounds of dispute upon the porch; " yit listen to 'em whin they gits together."

" That's because each one of them gets out of the talk just what she puts into it," explained the Matron.

" Manin' that if she comes to it cross it's cross answers she gits. It's right ye are, ma'am. 'Tis so about likin' or hatin' yer work. Days when yer bring happiness to yer work it goes like a bird, an' days when ye have the black dog on yer back the work turns round an' fights wid yer."

Ethel Blue listened intently. Things like that had happened to her but she had not supposed that grown people had such experiences. She remembered a day during the previous week when she had waked up cross. A dozen matters went wrong before she left the house to go to school. On the way the mud pulled off one of her overshoes, and her boot was soiled before she was shod again. The delay made her five minutes late and caused a black mark to deface her perfect attendance record. Every recitation went wrong in one way or another, and every one she spoke to was as cross as two sticks. As she thought it over she realized that if what Mrs. Schuler and Moya said was true the whole trouble came from herself. When she woke up not in the best of humor she ought to have

smoothed herself out before she went down to breakfast, and then she would have picked her way calmly over the crossing and not tried to take a short cut through the mud; she would not have been delayed and earned a tardy mark; she would have had an unclouded mind that could give its best attention to the recitations so that she would have done herself justice; people would have been glad to talk to her because she looked cheerful and was in a sunny mood and no one would have been cross.

"I guess it was all my fault," she thought. "I guess it will pay to straighten myself out before I get out of bed every morning."

All was well in and out of Rose House on the morning after the storm. Every one told her experiences as if she were the only person affected and they all talked at once and enjoyed themselves immensely. Vladimir came running up on to the porch in the middle of the morning and threw himself across his mother's lap.

"Where have you been now?" she asked him. He had come to breakfast only after being called a dozen times and he had disappeared immediately after breakfast. "What have you been doing?"

The little fellow laughed and poured into her lap a handful of nickels and ten-cent pieces.

"Where in the world did you get those?" demanded Mrs. Vereshchagin. "Who gave them to you?"

"A man in the road."

"A man in the road? All that money? What for?"

"I gave him the shiny thing and he gave me those moneys."

"What shiny thing?"

"The shiny thing I found on the floor."

"Where on the floor?"

"In the dining-room," and the youngster ran into the house to point out exactly the place where he had found the "shiny thing."

"A 'shiny thing,'" repeated Moya, who was putting the room in order and heard the Russian woman's inquiries. "'Tis two of 'em I found mesilf on the floor whin I cleared up the mess from the fireplace this morning. 'Twas two bits of brass. See, I saved 'em," and she shook from a scooped-out gourd which served as an ornament on the mantel two bits of metal.

"Was it like these, Vladdy?" she asked, but Vladimir was too tired of being questioned and ran away without answering.

His mother shook her head as she gazed at the bits lying on her palm.

"Not worth all these moneys," she murmured as she counted forty cents in the small coins in her other hand. It was a mystery.

Moya put the bits of brass back into the gourd and went on with her dusting.

Mrs. Schuler telephoned to Mr. Emerson early in the morning, telling him of the damage to the house and asking him to come and see what had happened so that the bricklayers might be set to work as soon as possible.

"I'm afraid to let Moya light the kitchen stove until I'm sure the chimney is sound," she explained.

Mr. Emerson telephoned the news to his grandchildren and he and all the Mortons with Dorothy

and her mother and Miss Merriam and Elisabeth arrived at the farm at almost the same time.

"I'm glad the house is in as good condition as it seems to be," exclaimed Mrs. Morton. "I couldn't bear to have the old homestead fall to ruin. I was startled at Father's message."

"Not so startled as all the people here were in the night," laughed her father who had been talking with Mrs. Schuler. "It seems that the worst noise came after the electric storm was over, but while the wind was at its highest."

"The chimney wasn't struck by lighting, then."

"It was not lightning," asserted Mr. Schuler. "The wind knocked bricks from the top of the chimney. I saw one or two on the roof this morning. As you see, several fell down the chimney into the fireplace."

"I can't see how bricks from the top of the chimney could have made the crack in the kitchen side of the chimney and this crack in the back of the fireplace."

"Nor I," agreed Mr. Schuler. "The roar was tremendous. I could not believe that I was seeing rightly when I beheld only these few fallen bricks."

"It sounded as if the whole chimney had fallen," Mrs. Schuler confirmed her husband's assertion.

"Mrs. Peterson says it sounded to her like an explosion, sir," said Moya, who had been talking with the women on the porch. "Her room is right over this. The bricks fell through the chimney, banging it all the way, says she, and thin there was a roar like powder had gone off, as far as I can understand what she says."

"If Mrs. Paterno heard that she must have thought the Black Hand was getting in its fine work, sure enough," smiled Mr. Emerson.

"Praise be, her room is on the other side of the house. We were all wailing like banshees up there, but she no more than the rest. 'Tis better she is," and Moya nodded reassuringly to the grown-ups, who were, she knew, deeply interested in the Italian woman's recovery of her nervous strength.

"This explosion business I don't understand," Mr. Emerson said slowly to himself. "What did you find in the fireplace this morning, Moya? I wish you had left all the stuff here for me to see."

"I'm sorry, sir. I was only thinkin' about havin' it clean before breakfast. There was the bricks, sir, two of 'em; and a pile of soot and some bits of trash wid no meanin'—"

"Did you find my two thinieth I picked up on the track yesterday?" asked Dicky. "Ethels made me throw away all the thingth in my pocket and my thinieth went too."

"What does he mean by his 'shinies'?" asked Mr. Emerson.

"He picked up a lot of stuff yesterday when we were hunting arrow heads and walking to Rosemont by the short cut over the track. When I was putting Mrs. Schuler's storm cape on him I emptied out his pocketful of trash into the fireplace."

"What did the shinies look like, son?" inquired Dicky's grandfather.

Dicky was entering into an elaborate and unintelligible explanation when Moya took the bits of brass from the gourd.

"Would these be the shinies?" she asked.

Mr. Emerson took them from her and examined them carefully.

"I rather think the explanation of the explosion is here," he decided. "You say you picked these up on the track, Dicky?"

"Yeth, I did, and Ethel threw them away," repeated the youngster who was beginning to think that he had a real grievance, since his "shinies" seemed to have some importance.

"These are two of the small dynamite cartridges that brakemen lay on the track to notify the engineer of a following train to stop for some reason. They use them in stormy weather or when there is reason to think that the usual flag or red light between the rails won't be seen."

"Dynamite!" exclaimed Ethel Brown, looking at her hand as she remembered that she had not been especially gentle when she tossed the contents of her brother's pocket into the fireplace.

"There is enough dynamite in a cartridge to make a sharp detonation but not enough to do any damage, unless, as happened here, there were two of them in a small space that was enclosed on three sides —"

"The trash was blown out on the floor of the room," interrupted Mr. Schuler.

"— by walls that were none too strong. With a wind such as last night's knocking down the chimney at the top and bricks setting dynamite cartridges into action below I only wonder that the old thing is standing at all this morning."

They gazed at it as if they expected the whole affair to fall before their eyes.

"I'll call up the brickmason and find out when he

can come to examine it; he may have to rebuild the entire chimney."

Mr. Emerson was moving toward the hall where the telephone was when his eye fell on Elisabeth sitting contentedly on the floor close to the wall turning over and over something that gleamed.

"What have you got there, small blessing?" he asked, stooping to make sure that she was not intending to try the taste of whatever it might be.

"Hullo!" he cried, straightening himself. "Hullo!" and he held up his discovery before the astonished eyes of the group.

"It looks like a gold coin, Grandfather!" exclaimed Ethel Brown.

"That's just what it is. A guinea. Its date is 1762. Where did you find it, Ayleesabet?" he asked the child, who was reaching up her tiny hands for the return of her new plaything.

"Here, here," she answered, pointing to the floor where the casing of the chimney yawned from the planks for half an inch. "Here," and she pushed her fingers into the crack.

"I saw her pull something that was sticking out of there a little bit," said Dorothy, "but I was interested in what Mr. Emerson was saying and I didn't pay much attention to what she was doing."

Miss Merriam took Elisabeth on her lap and peered between her lips to make sure that no dirt from the floor was visible. Then she took a small emergency kit from her pocket, extracted a bit of sterile gauze and wiped out the little pink mouth.

"I live in hopes that the day will come when she'll outgrow her desire to test everything with her mouth," she remarked amusedly.

"Grandfather, do you — do you think that could possibly be one of Algernon Merriam's guineas," asked Ethel Brown, who had been talking breathlessly with Ethel Blue.

"The idea occurred to me," said her grandfather.

"Is it guineas ye're speaking about?" asked Moya. "Perhaps 'twas a guinea young Vladdy the Russian found this morning. He said he found a 'shiny thing.' I thought 'twas one of thim cartridges, like I found myself."

"Another shiny thing? What did he do with it? Let's see it?" demanded Mr. Emerson.

"He said he gave it to a man in the road and the man gave him a handful of ten-cent pieces and nickels. There was forty cents of it. I heard Mrs. Vereshchagin counting 'em."

"Forty cents! It must have been a valuable shiny thing that a man in the road would give a child forty cents for. He knew its value. I should say Vladimir and Elisabeth had tapped the same till. Helen, go and see if you can find out anything more from the child or his mother. And Roger, get a chisel and hammer and hatchet and perhaps you and Mr. Schuler and I can take down these boards and see what there is to see behind them."

"Wouldn't it be thrilling if there should be a hidden treasure!" exclaimed Ethel Blue. "Aren't you shivering all over with excitement, Miss Gertrude?"

"Not quite as bad as that," laughed Miss Merriam, "but I am excited. Just suppose we should find the treasure whose loss kept little Patience two years from being married!"

She smiled a trifle sadly and patted Elisabeth, who was sitting contentedly on her lap.

Meanwhile Roger and his grandfather were prying off the boards that covered in the chimney on the right side and supported the mantel-shelf. As it fell back into their hands two more gold coins tumbled to the floor.

"I believe we have found Algernon's coins!" cried Mr. Emerson. "Just take off this narrow plank, Roger and let me squint in there. Stand back, please, all of you, and let us have as much light as we can."

"I have a flashlight," said Mr. Schuler.

"Just the ticket. Now, then —," and Mr. Emerson kneeled down, peering into the space that was disclosed when the boards fell away. "I see something; I certainly see something," he cried as the electricity searched into the darkness.

He thrust in his arm but the something was too far off.

"Take my crutch," suggested Mr. Schuler.

Mr. Emerson took it and tugged away with the top.

"It's coming, it's coming," his muffled cry rose from the depths.

Another tug and a blackened leather pouch, slashed with a jagged tear from which gold pieces were pouring, tumbled into the room.

"Pick it all up and put it on the table, Roger, while Mr. Schuler and I decide how it happened," ordered Mr. Emerson.

The investigation seemed to prove that there probably had been a crack in the bricks at the back of the mantel at the time when Algernon Merriam had thrust the bag into the mantel cupboard. It had fallen off the back of the shelf and into the little

crevasse where it lay beyond the reach of arm or bent wire or candle light for over a hundred and thirty years.

"Evidently last night's big shaking widened the crack and let the bag fall down. The ragged edge of a broken brick tore the leather and the two coins that Vladimir and Elisabeth found slipped out and fell just inside the plank covering of the chimney and below it out on to the floor."

"So did the two that fell out when we were working," added Roger.

"Let's open it and count the money. This may be some other bag," suggested Helen, who had brought back no farther information from the Russian. "If it's Algernon's it ought to have — how many guineas was it?"

"Five hundred and seventy-three, and a ring and a miniature," continued Ethel Brown.

"In a box," concluded Ethel Blue. "I can't wait for Roger to undo it!"

They gathered around the table on which Roger had placed the stained bag, the gold coins gleaming through a gash in its side. Moya cleaned the outside as well as she could with a damp cloth.

"See, here are some crumbs of sealing-wax still clinging to the cord," and Grandfather Emerson cut the string that still tied the mouth. Before their amazed eyes there rolled first a small box and then guineas as bright as when they were tied up in their prison.

"We shan't have to count the guineas; if the ring and the miniature are in the box that will prove that it's Algernon's bag," said Helen.

"Here, young woman; hands off," cried her

grandfather as Helen was preparing to open the box. "Algernon and Patience were no direct ancestors of yours. Miss Merriam is the suitable person to perform this ceremony."

Helen, smiling, pushed the basket toward Miss Gertrude who slipped off the string with trembling fingers.

"I'm almost afraid to take off the cover," she whispered.

"O, do hurry up, Miss Gertrude," implored Ethel Brown. "I think I shall burst if I don't know all about it soon!"

With misty eyes Gertrude slowly lifted the cover from the box. Wrapped in a twist of cotton was a ring set with several large diamonds.

"Is it marked 'Gertrude'?" asked Dorothy breathlessly.

Miss Merriam nodded.

Below the ring lay a miniature, the portrait of a fair woman with deep blue eyes. It was set round with brilliants and on the gold back was engraved, "Gertrude Merriam."

Miss Merriam stared at it and then handed it to Mr. Emerson.

"What a marvellous likeness!" he exclaimed. "You must be able to see it yourself."

Gertrude nodded again, not trusting herself to speak.

"There's no question that she's your ancestor. Now, I'd like to see if the correct number of coins is here if you'll let Roger and me count your guineas for you."

"Count *my* guineas?" cried Miss Merriam.

"Certainly they're your guineas. You're a direct

descendant of Algernon and Patience. The bag and its contents belong to you."

Gertrude stared at Mr. Emerson as if she could not understand him.

"Mine?" she repeated, "mine?" but when Mr. Emerson insisted and the other elders congratulated her and the girls kissed her and Roger shook hands formally, she began to realize that this little fortune really was hers by right and not through the kindness of her friends.

The count of the coins proved exact. There were 569 of them.

"Here are the two that fell on the floor when we were hammering," said Roger, laying them on the table. "They make 571."

"And here is the one that Ayleesabet found," added Mr. Emerson, drawing it from his pocket. "That is the five hundred and seventy-second. Young Vladimir's trophy has gone for good, I'm afraid. He must have sold it to some passer-by who knew enough to realize that it was a valuable coin and wasn't honest enough to hunt for the owner or to pay the child its full value."

"Every one of the 573 is accounted for, anyway," declared Roger. "You won't think it impertinent if I figure out how much you're worth, will you Miss Gertrude?"

"I shall be glad if you will," she answered.

"A guinea is 21 shillings and a shilling is about 24 cents in American money. That makes a guinea worth about $5.04. Five hundred-and-seventy-two times that makes $2882.88."

"Almost three thousand dollars!" exclaimed Gertrude, her face radiant; "why — why now —"

she broke off suddenly and hid her face on Mrs. Smith's shoulder, sobbing.

"Now I can pay all my indebtedness and be free to do what I please," she said to her friend in an undertone.

Mrs. Smith patted her gently, for she knew what it was she wanted to be free to do.

"This fortune is going to mount up to more than three thousand dollars," declared Mr. Emerson. "There isn't a coin here that was minted later than 1774. There can't be, because Algernon came to this country in the early part of 1775. Pile them up according to the dates on them, children, and let's see what there is that will appeal to the dealer in antiquities."

"At that rate every coin here, even the youngest, is worth more than $5.04," exclaimed Roger.

"You get the idea, my son," smiled his grandfather. "We'll sell these coins separately for Miss Gertrude and get a special price on each one. Here's one, for instance, that ought to be worth a good bonus; it is dated 1663. It was over a hundred years old when your respected great-great-grandfather brought it over here, and if I remember my English history correctly it was in 1663 that guineas were first minted. This is a 'first edition,' so to speak."

Gertrude leaned back in her chair, smiling happily.

"Isn't it perfectly wonderful that the very same money that delayed my great-great-grandmother's marriage will hasten mine!" she murmured to Mrs. Smith.

CHAPTER XVIII

GERTRUDE CHANGES HER NAME

GERTRUDE MERRIAM was pleased at the good fortune that had, literally, fallen to her, and her good friends of the United Service Club were rejoiced, but Edward Watkins was elated beyond power of expression.

"Here I was trying to school myself to wait for nobody knows how long until Gertrude should make enough money to satisfy her conscience, and now there isn't any reason at all for waiting another minute."

"Edward!" remonstrated Miss Merriam, who, with Mrs. Smith and Dorothy was listening to this oration in Mrs. Smith's drawing room.

"Of course she's all right about insisting on paying off that miserable indebtedness of hers; I wouldn't have had her feel any other way about it; but now she can do it right off *instanter,*" and Edward seized Dorothy and marched her around the room in the "One, two, three, back," step that they both had learned from the Mortons as an expression of extreme pleasure.

"Mr. Emerson hasn't sold all the coins for me yet," Gertrude protested.

"He was telling me about it this afternoon. He's going slowly so as not to flood the market, and he's finding out what every date is worth so that none of special value shall escape him. He sent some to

friends in Boston and Washington and Chicago and St. Louis to sell there, and he's attending himself to the New York and Trenton and Philadelphia dealers."

"How shrewd he is! I never should have thought of all that!" said Mrs. Smith admiringly.

"And how kind he is!" added Gertrude softly.

"How could he help being kind," and Edward gazed at her with an expression that deepened the pink of her cheeks.

Just then the telephone rang. Dorothy answered it and came back to say that Mr. Emerson wanted to speak to Miss Merriam.

When she returned a few minutes later she was full of excitement.

"*What* do you think Mr. Emerson says! He has just found out that one of the coins is one that is not only of a date that is very rare but it has some peculiarity that was seen on the first ones that were issued in that year and not in the later ones. I understood that it was something that made them call in the whole issue and melt them down again. Only a few escaped, and they are so rare that he has already been offered $1300 for it and he thinks he can work the bid up higher."

Dorothy clapped her hands and pranced with joy.

"I really believe I'll ask you to go into town with me tomorrow and help me begin to get some of my things," Gertrude murmured to Mrs. Smith in an undertone that nevertheless reached Edward's ears.

"Great and glorious!" he ejaculated. "Is it going to be white satin?"

Gertrude blushed again.

"It will be white something," she answered.

" I'm so glad," returned Mrs. Smith. " A travelling dress will do if it is necessary, but a white frock has the truest meaning for a young bride."

" Edward says I shan't need many dresses in Oklahoma or any but simple ones until he makes his fortune in oil as well as medicine, so my shopping won't be long or difficult," explained Gertrude; " and I thought perhaps we'd better go to the School of Mothercraft and see if the Director has any one who can take my place here."

Her eyes filled as she looked across the room at Elisabeth who was humming like a contented pussy as she built remarkable block houses which had but a brief existence.

" What *shall* we do without you," exclaimed Mrs. Smith.

" Now, dear Mrs. Smith, we shall all be in tears in a few minutes at this rate," objected Edward. " Come and walk to the train with me, Gertrude, and remember that Mother is expecting both of you to lunch with her to-morrow if you can spare the time from your shopping."

When it became known in Rosemont that Miss Merriam's wedding day had been decided on there was proof at once that she had made herself greatly beloved. All the Emersons' and Mortons' and Smiths' friends besieged her with requests to be allowed to help in some way with her preparations. The women at Rose House began to work on secret pieces of embroidery of great importance. Every member of the U. S. C. was eager to give her a personal gift, and they wanted to make her a present as a club also.

" She has been as good as gold to us," declared

Ethel Brown emphatically. "She's never been cross and she's helped us with our entertainments and our work."

"I should say she had!" added Ethel Blue. "Look at the time she has spent at Rose House trying to teach those women how to take care of their children."

"Don't you think it would be cunning to give her a present from Ayleesabet?" suggested Dorothy.

"I think it would be too dear for words!"

"Have you heard Della say what the Watkinses are going to give her and Edward?"

"Mother and Mrs. Watkins talked about it the day that Mother and Miss Gertrude lunched there," offered Dorothy. "Mother told her that your grandfather and grandmother wanted to give her a silver service and that she and your mother would like to give her the flat silver, and that she was going to get her linen herself. Then Mrs. Watkins said that the Watkinses would give them their china and glass."

"Won't their house be lovely!"

"It certainly will be pretty and if every one's love could shine out of each article it would just be filled with love."

"There'll be plenty of love there if the doctor's and Miss Gertrude's faces tell the truth!"

They laughed gently for the engaged couple went about beaming like two rising suns.

"Did you know that Edward said this morning that his patient is getting on so well that the physicians are going to discharge him from the hospital next week? He asked Miss Gertrude if she could be ready a week earlier than they had planned."

"What did she say?"

"She said 'yes' as long as the cards weren't engraved yet."

"Did they settle on the very day?"

"A week from next Tuesday."

"We'll have to hurry then."

The Club had been prominent figures at Mrs. Schuler's wedding, but that was a very small affair at home, and Miss Gertrude's was to be in the church with a reception afterwards at Dorothy's house. The Club felt that they wanted to do every bit of the work that they could, not only because they loved Miss Gertrude but because she was going to marry the brother of two of the Club members. She had said that she would like to have the church decorated with wild flowers so that she might take away with her the remembrance of the blossoms that she had seen and loved in the Rosemont fields.

The Club held a special meeting to talk over their plans for the wedding. It was at Rose House, for they had become accustomed to meeting there during the summer, when every moment could be utilized for work on something connected with the furnishing of the house while at the same time they could talk as they hammered and measured and screwed and sewed. They were gathered under the tree where the squirrel lived. As they established themselves, he was sitting on a branch above them, twitching his tail and making ready for a descent to search for cookies in their pockets.

Helen called the meeting to order and told them what Miss Gertrude had said about the decorations.

"Has any one any suggestions?" she asked.

"Shall we have all the different kinds of flowers we can find or select one kind?" asked Ethel Brown.

"We can get goldenrod and asters now."

"And cardinals and cat-tails."

"And 'old-maids.'"

"And hollyhocks."

"Nobody has said 'Queen Anne's Lace.' I think that's the prettiest of all," urged Ethel Blue. "Wouldn't it be delicate and fairy-like if we trimmed the whole church with it!"

"O, Ethel, I see it in a flash!" cried Della. "Not banked heavily anywhere, but always in feathery masses."

"On the altar and winding the chancel rail."

"A cluster on the end of each pew."

"Long garlands instead of ribbons to close the ends of the pews."

"An arch about half way up the aisle."

The whole scene grew on them as they talked and they waxed enthusiastic over the details. They had learned that flowers to be used for decoration should be picked the day beforehand and placed in water over night so that the moisture should have time to force itself into the stalks and to drive away the first wilting. They decided to gather all the Queen Anne's Lace that they could find in all Rosemont, accepting the help of all the children who had asked if they might help.

"We'll need tubs and tubs of it," said Ethel Brown.

"We can get all we need, I'm sure; and the sexton will give us water and let us keep them in the Parish House over night."

"Will Mrs. Smith let us decorate the house, or

has she some other plan for that?" asked Margaret Hancock of Dorothy.

"She said we might do it, but she suggested that we should make it all pink if there were still enough flowers in our pink gardens."

Mrs. Smith was building a new house, and Dorothy and the Ethels had planted a flower garden on the new lot although the house was not yet done. They had arranged to have a succession of pink blossoms. For fear it would not turn out well because they had not been able to have the soil put in as good condition as they wanted on account of the disturbed state of the place with workmen constantly crossing, they had tried another pink garden at Rose House, and the Ethels had planted still another bed in their own yard.

"Among them all I should think we ought to find enough, if all the blossoms don't take it into their heads to fall off the very day before," said Ethel Brown gloomily.

"Don't talk that way!" insisted Ethel Blue. "We'll find lots of pink flowers and Aunt Louise's drawing-room will look lovely."

"We can put some of the feathery white with it."

"And we must find some soft green somewhere. The coloring of the room is so delicate that the pink and white effect will be charming," and Helen leaned back against the tree trunk with a satisfied smile.

"The next point is that Aunt Louise says she'd be very glad if we'd all assist at the reception just as we do at Mother's teas — handing things to eat and being nice to people."

They all nodded their understanding of their duties.

"Are all of you girls going to be dressed alike?" asked Tom.

"No, sir. Della is to be maid of honor. She's to wear the most delicate shade of pink you can imagine. The Ethels are to have a shade that is just a wee bit darker, and Margaret and I are to come last—"

"Being the tallest."

"—wearing real rose-colored frocks. It's going to be beautiful."

"I can easily believe it," declared James, making an attempt at a bow that was defeated by the fact that he was lying on his back and found the exploit too difficult to achieve. "I also seem to see you flitting around the house under those pink decorations. You'll run the bride hard."

"Edward won't think so," laughed Tom. "Now what are we going to give to Gertrude—"

"Hear him say 'Gertrude,'" said Ethel Blue under her breath.

"She asked us to. Of course we call her by her name. She's going to be our sister."

The Ethels looked quite depressed, for calling Miss Gertrude by her first name was a privilege they knew they never should have.

"I was inquiring what we're going to give Gertrude as a Club. We Watkinses are going to give her something as a family, and Della and I have each picked out a special present from us ourselves—"

"That's the way we're doing," came from the Mortons.

"—but I think it would be nice to give her something from the whole of us, because if it hadn't been

for the Club and the Club baby she wouldn't have come here at all."

"Let's put our colossal intellects on it," urged Roger.

"If we could think of something that no one else would give her —"

"And that would remind her of us and the things the Club does."

"The Club makes furniture," laughed Roger, "but I shouldn't suggest that we repeat our latest triumph and give her a sideboard made of old boxes."

They all roared, but James came up with a serious expression after a roll that took him some distance away from his friends.

"Boxes am ree-diculous," he remarked, "but furniture isn't. Isn't there some piece of furniture that they'd like better than anything else we could give them?"

"I've got an idea," announced Roger.

"Quick, quick; catch it!" and Tom tossed over his cap to hold any notions that might trickle away from the main mass.

"Since we've been doing this furniture making for Rose House I've spent a good deal of time in the carpenter shop on Main Street. You know it belongs to the son of those old people down by the bridge, Mr. and Mrs. Atwood."

"The ones we gave a 'show' for?" asked Della.

"The same people. The son was pleased at our going there and he hasn't minded my fooling round his place and he's given me a lot of points. He makes good furniture himself."

"As good as yours?" asked James dryly.

"Go on!" retorted Roger. "He's a real joiner rather than a carpenter, but there isn't any chance for a joiner in a town like Rosemont, so he does any kind of carpentering."

"Go ahead, Roger. We don't care for the gentleman's biography."

"Yes, you do; it has some bearing on what I'm going to propose."

"Let her shoot, then."

"Mr. Atwood has a whole heap of splendid mahogany planks in his shop. I came across them one day and asked him about them. He's been collecting them a long time and they're splendidly seasoned and he's just waiting for a chance to make them into something."

"A light begins to break. We'll have him make our present. Are you sure he'll make it well enough? It's got to be a crackerjack to be suitable for Miss Gertrude."

"This is what I thought. The doctor and Miss Gertrude both like open bookcases. I heard them say once they liked to be able to take out a book without having to bother with a door."

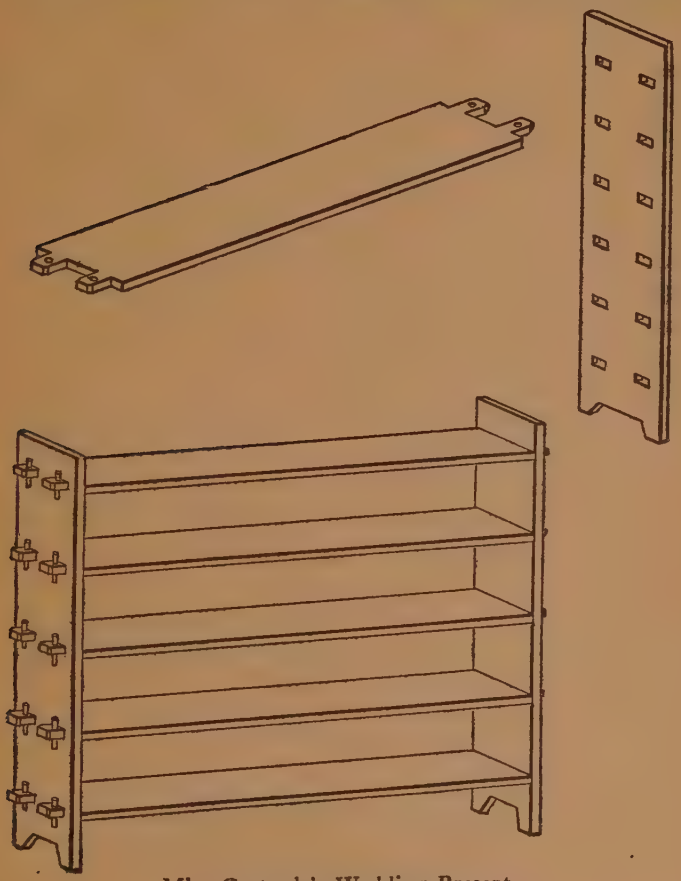
"Me, too," agreed Margaret. "And I never could see the use of a back."

"That's what I say," said Helen. "I'd rather dust the books more carefully and not have the extra weight added to the bookcase."

"You know the furniture they call 'knock-down'?"

Everybody nodded. They had all become familiar with various makes of furniture since their attention had been called to the subject by their summer's interests.

"I think Mr. Atwood can make us a bookcase that will consist of two upright end pieces with holes



Miss Gertrude's Wedding Present.

through them where each shelf is to go. The shelves will have two extensions on each end that will go through these square holes and they will be

held in place by wedges driven through these extensions on the outside of the uprights. Get me?"

They all said they did.

"That's all there is to the bookcase. It can be taken to pieces in ten minutes and packed flat and shipped from Rosemont to Oklahoma with some chance of its reaching there unbroken; and it can be set up in another ten minutes. What do you say?"

There wasn't a dissenting voice, and they were so pleased with the scheme that they went to Mr. Atwood's that very afternoon, looked at the wood, talked over the finish, and left the order. It was so simple that the maker thought that he could have it done before the wedding and he agreed to take it apart and pack it for shipment so that there would be no danger of its not making its journey safely.

The wedding day was a trifle too warm, Dorothy thought as she gazed out early in the morning and considered the flowers that must be set in place several hours before the time when they were to be seen.

"We must take care not to have them look like those dandelions in the book wedding that began so joyously and ended all in a wizzle," she murmured, and she was more than ever glad that they had taken the precaution to pick them the day before and have them in water.

By early afternoon all was in readiness and the girls were resting. Miss Gertrude had not been allowed to help but had stayed quietly in her room.

The wedding was at half past four, and at that hour the little church, which looked perfectly lovely in the opinion of the decorators, was pleasantly filled with murmuring groups of Rosemont people, who

agreed that the feathery decorations proved yet another plume in the caps of the Club members, and of New York people who gazed at the modest country chapel and found it charming.

There was a happy *brrrr* of pleasant comment while the organ played softly. Roger and James were two of the ushers. Friends of Edward's, young doctors, were the other two.

As the organ broke into the Lohengrin march and Edward, with Tom for his best man, appeared at the chancel, Gertrude came down the aisle from the other end of the church. She wore a simple white trailing dress of soft silk, clasped at the breast with the ancient brilliant-framed miniature of another Gertrude Merriam. A pearl pendant, a gift from Ayleesabet, hung from her neck. On her ungloved right hand the older Gertrude Merriam's ring blazed beside Edward's more modest offering.

With the bride walked Mr. Emerson. Before her came Dicky, leading the procession. Behind him Della, and behind her the four bridesmaids, glowing in their rosy frocks. The clergyman of the parish was assisted by Edward's father, Mr. Watkins, who smiled at his son and the beautiful girl who was to become his daughter in a few minutes' time.

The Ethels held each others' hands as they stood behind the bride, wreaths of Queen Anne's Lace over their arms, and a delicate blossom or two tucked under a pale blue ribbon in each filmy white hat. It seemed but a moment to them and it was all over and Miss Gertrude was no longer " Miss Gertrude " but " Mrs. Edward." The doctor seemed to have put on new dignity and the girls found themselves wonder-

ing if they should ever call him "Edward" again.

Gertrude swept by them with her eyes full of happiness, but when she reached the back of the church she gave a lovely smile to the women and children of Rose House seated in the last pews.

"I want every one to see my lovely presents," Miss Gertrude had said, so the guests exclaimed over the pretty things grouped in the library.

It was all simple and happy, and a bit of pathos at the end of the afternoon brought no depression. Gertrude was just about to go upstairs to change her dress and she stood with her maids and ushers around her, exchanging a laughing word or two with them, when a little procession made its way toward her from the dining-room. It consisted of all the women and children from Rose House, dressed in the fresh clothes which the women had made for themselves and the children during the summer. They were all so smiling that they could hardly have been recognized as the forlorn creatures who had come to Rosemont early in July. Each woman held in her hand a centrepiece, embroidered in the characteristic work of her country.

Mrs. Vereshchagin led the way, because she could speak English a little better than the others, but her English failed her when she came face to face with the bride.

"We love you," she said simply, making a sweeping gesture that included the bridegroom and all the U. S. C. members who were standing about. "We give you these embroideries of our lands. We love all of you."

And all the women and children cried in chorus, "We love all of you."